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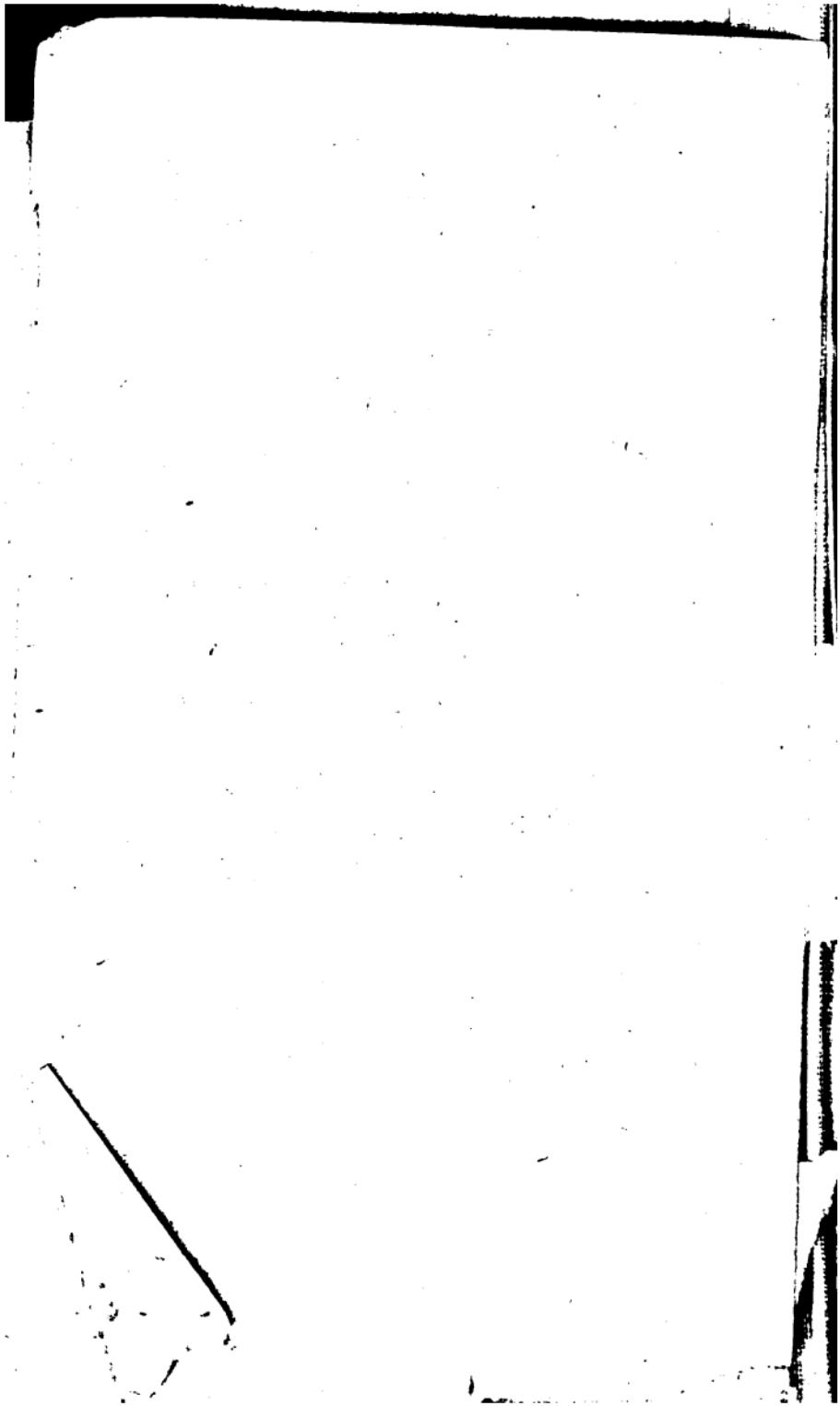
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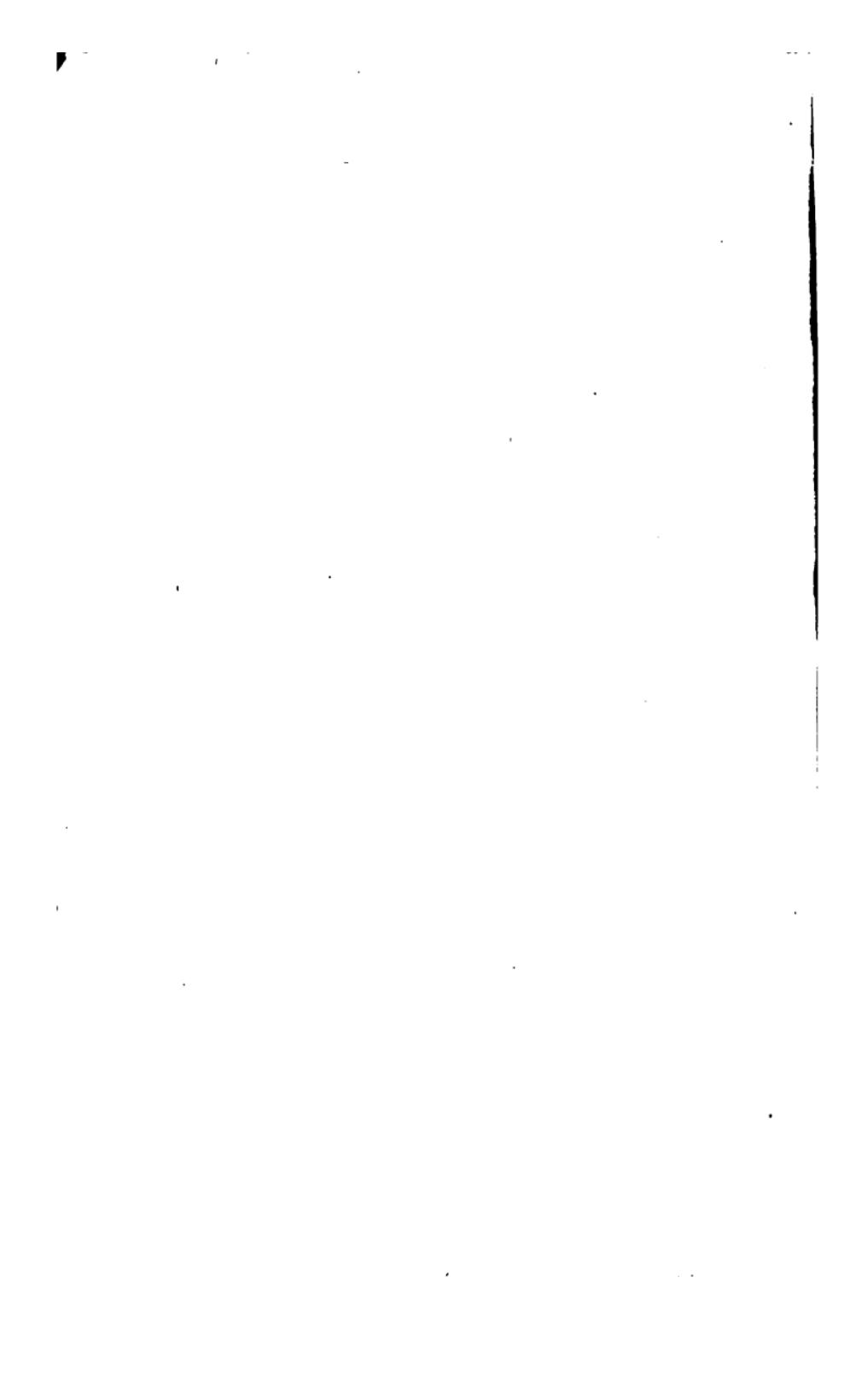
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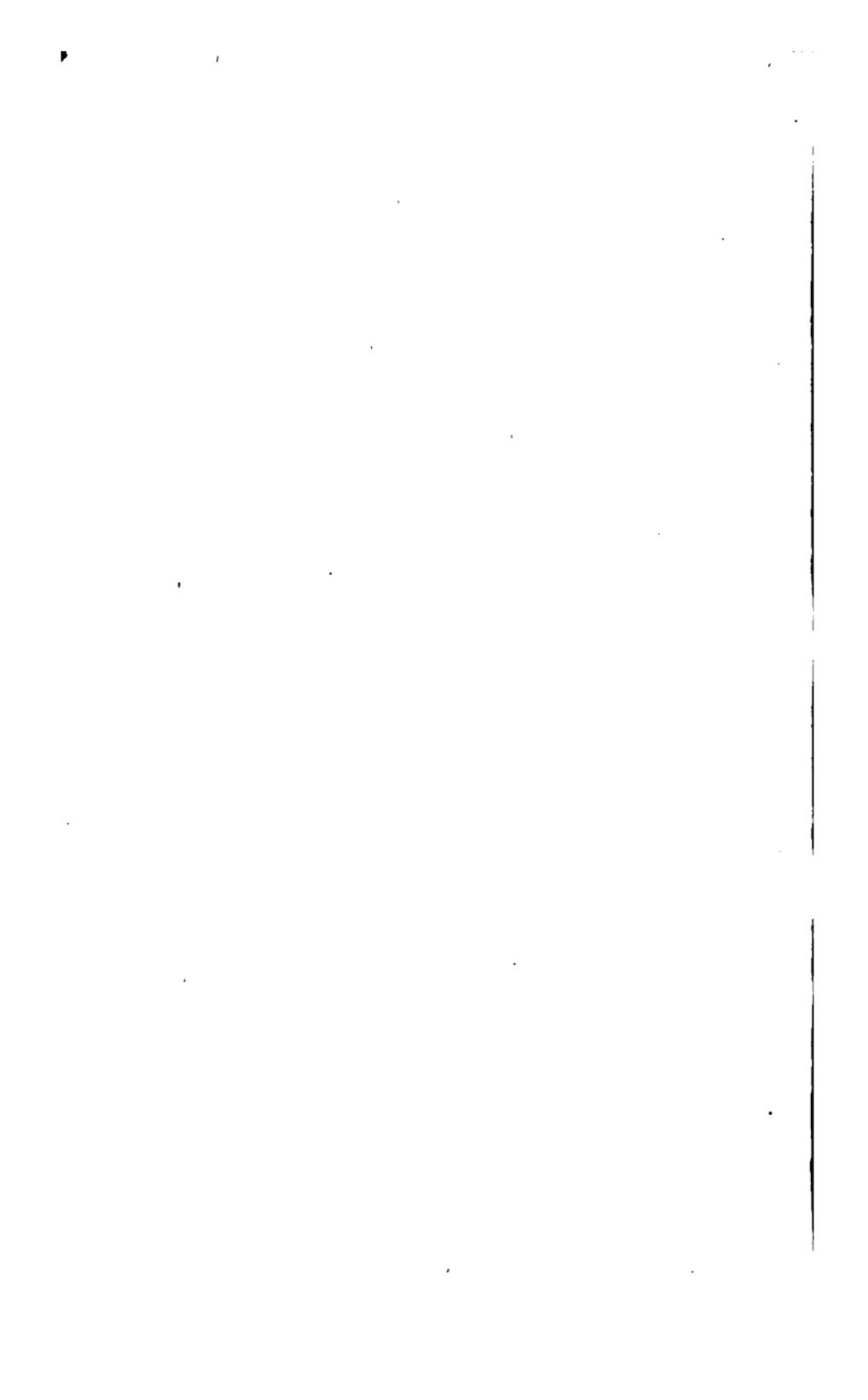




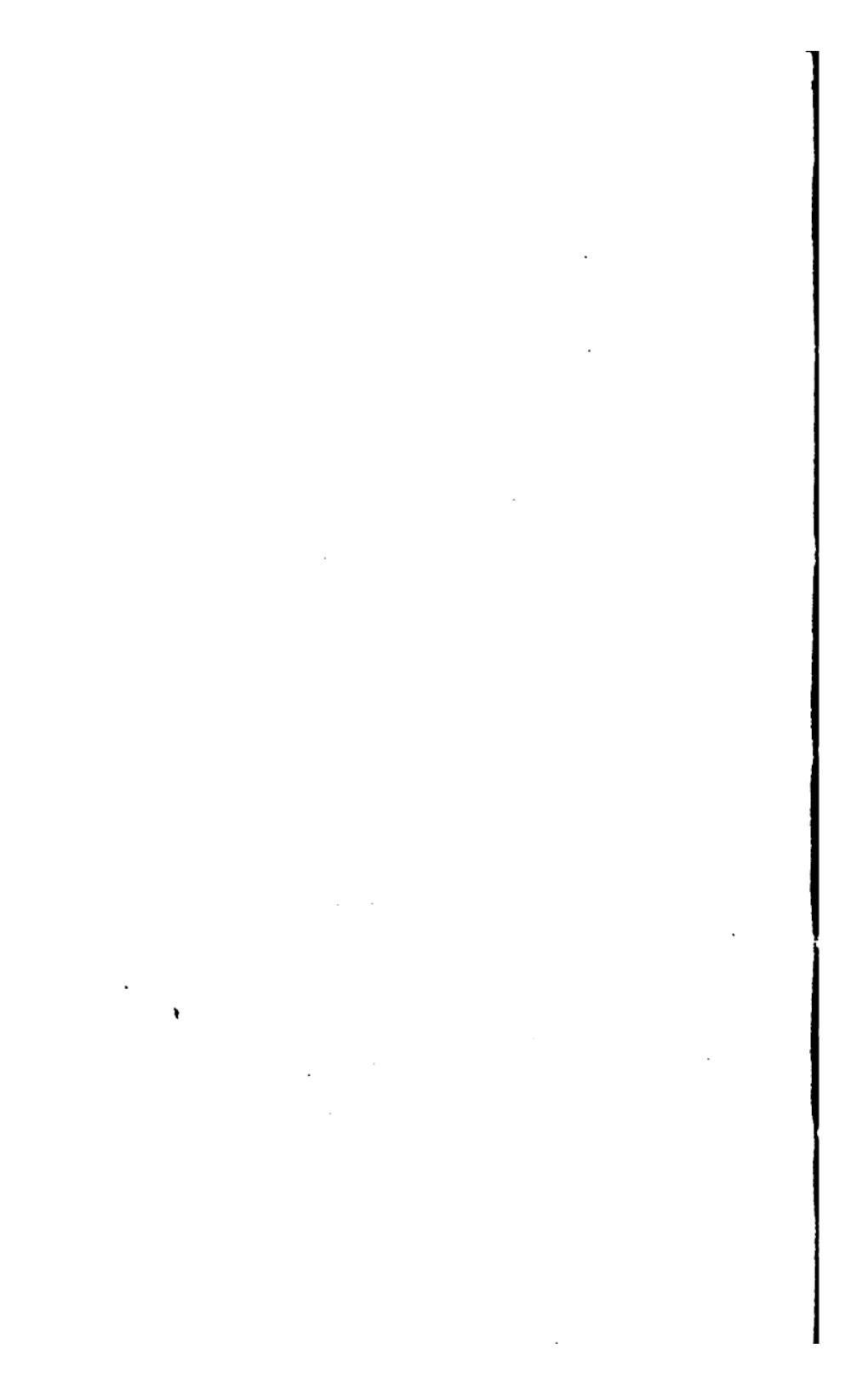




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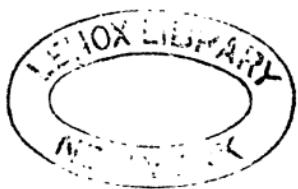
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AN ACCOUNT
OF THE
LIFE AND WRITINGS
OF
JOHN DAVID MICHAELIS.

BY PROFESSOR J. G. EICHHORN.

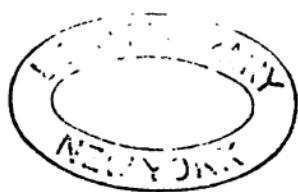
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AN ACCOUNT
OF THE
LIFE AND WRITINGS
OF
J. D. MICHAELIS.*

THE life of the man of letters, who attains to a good old age, seems, at its close, no longer to receive its merited recompense. At the death of the active man of business, both city and country are frequently immersed in grief. At the grave of the scholar, who finds an early tomb, loud lamentations are frequently heard. But around the remains of the grey-headed veteran in this honourable service, there reigns, for the most part, a dreary stillness. The multitude of those to whom his deserts are known, are not assembled around his bier; for these are scattered far and wide, in different countries, by the various allotments of Providence. The friends of his youth, who estimate their loss with enthusiastic ardour, in the language of poetry, can no longer bewail his death; for the greater number already slumber in the tomb, and the surviving few, oppressed with years, have only strength enough remaining to drop a silent tear over his grave. His influence upon the sciences, owing to their incessant changes, has diminished with his declining years. His earlier services operate imperceptibly, and in scattered

* Born, February 1717; died, August 1791.

rays, in the vast empire of truth, appreciable only by a devoted few. The tidings of his death were already long anticipated. How could the news of that event, under such circumstances, prostrate like a sudden and afflictive stroke? How could the distant feel his death like those who are near? The absent like the present? This would be contrary to the course of nature. An event, for some time anticipated, makes at last but a feeble impression. A remote event affects us not like one which is near ; nor that removed from our sight, like that before our eyes ; what is scattered operates more feebly than what is concentrated at one point. Time, however, makes amends for all ; it gathers, weighs, compares, and estimates ; and awards, at length, to greater merit, its appropriate praise.

Let this, then, be the consolation of all the friends and admirers of the illustrious Michaelis of unfading memory, (who ceased, on the 22d of August, to adorn Göttingen with his presence) although the tidings of his decease could not be expected to agitate all Germany, like a sudden shock. Exhausted of his bodily vigour for many years before his death, he sank away slowly and gradually, at an unusually advanced age, loaded with honours and with years ; and even till the last week of his life, industriously employed in communicating oral and written instruction to his contemporaries and to posterity —a genuine teacher of Europe. Such a man needs not a noisy publication of his praise ; greater than every other and far more eloquent, is the silent praise of his surviving merits. He needs no proud monument erected by friends and admirers ; the most illustrious and lasting monument, he has himself erected, during his active life of seventy-four years—the honourable monument of his intellectual achievements.

To contemplate these achievements, to form a lively idea of his eminently industrious and meritorious life, and to recal thus the image of the man ; to transport ourselves to the period at which his career commenced, and to estimate the difficulties with which he had to grapple ; to ascertain the means by which he surmounted the ob-

stacles of education, and subdued the prejudices of his earlier and later contemporaries ; to trace the footsteps of his discursive mind, and inquire how far he advanced and where he stopped ; where we could only follow in his track, and where we could pass beyond him—this is all that he has left for us. This alone can be denominated honouring his name and celebrating his memory, according to his taste, in such a manner as he himself, if a departed spirit indulges solicitude for the concerns of earth, would regard with complacency. Shallow praises he would despise, as he despised them when on earth. He who was alive only to merited reputation, would now be gratified only by that praise which is his due. He who was unceasingly engaged in the investigation of what mankind denominate truth, would be gratified only with the truth concerning himself. He who found in literary employment his only satisfaction, and the only recreation of his declining years, would doubtless be delighted, if by recalling his example, we should animate ourselves to the like industry and activity.

Let this then be the offering which I deposit on his grave—a poor and trivial offering, it is true, compared with that which his other pupils or his older friends will bring. But even the smallest present, made with a fond and grateful heart, has its value and desert. No one, during his life, clung to him with a more devoted attachment, a more lively admiration of his greatness, and a greater degree of gratitude for his manifold services ; nor shall any one surpass me now after his decease.

In tracing the development of his mind, no one could have assisted us better than Michaelis himself, if he had left a circumstantial and accurate history of every period of his life. His earlier friends might still, in part, supply the deficiency, who, as is the fact with some, enjoyed his friendship from his earliest youth ; or, at least, were witnesses of his literary plans and connections, and of his method of study, during certain active periods of his life, or could furnish much pertaining to these subjects from his own mouth. I cannot avail myself of these satisfactory sources. I can only have recourse to a few leaves

which inform us of the more important revolutions of his life, and to my own recollection of scattered information which I have met with in his writings.

Michaelis received his whole education, up to the time of his first appearance in public as *Magister Legens* in the year 1739, in Halle, his native city, at that time not the most eligible place for the literary education of a theologian.*

The Orphan house, where he received his final preparation for the university, was the residence of a wild fanaticism. The school connected with the same, although at that period far superior to most of the similar institutions in Germany, embraced no regulations fully adapted to promote the solid education of the future university man of letters; for which situation his father, at an early period, seems to have intended him. The universally important study of the ancient classics flourished there only to a moderate degree and within narrow limits. The Latin authors, it is true, were explained,

* [The reader will doubtless be struck with the revolting manner in which the author of this life of Michaelis speaks of the venerable University of Halle, and of the piety for which it was so long and so eminently distinguished. The writer, it is presumed, is the celebrated Eichhorn, whose talents and attainments have placed him at the head of the present literati of his country. Those who have had any opportunity of becoming acquainted with his character, are aware of his laxity of sentiment, his contempt of practical piety, and his hardihood in trifling with the most sacred subjects. Such persons will not be surprised at his sneers at what he terms the extravagant fanaticism of Halle; and will be able to appreciate the value of all those remarks, with which the article abounds, relative to points in which religion or sound doctrine are concerned.

Our reasons for inserting the article are, that its objectionable portions, when the character of its author are known, must be entirely harmless; and that the life of JOHN D. MICHAELIS fills a larger space in the literary history of Germany, for the 18th century, than that of any other individual. Living, as he did, during the period at which the great revolution in the opinions and mode of study of the theologians of that country was occurring, and being himself one of the most prominent actors in the scene, there is (apart from the varied and intrinsic merit of many of his works,) much, in the mere circumstances in which he lived, to secure the interest of every intelligent reader. Ed.]

but were explained much too imperfectly. In regard to the Greek, they employed their grammatical drudgery upon the New Testament, as if there were no other Greek writings in the world ; and, in general, all the instruction in the ancient languages was directed solely to the grammar and the lexicon, and not to the cultivation of taste, which should always remain the principal object.* On the other hand, absurd as it may seem, a full course of instruction in the philosophy of Wolf was given under the unsuspected sanction of the Orphan house ; a course which no one, even at the university, would have ventured to give, because the curse of the Hallean theologians still rested upon it.

The peculiar situation of the university at that time was well adapted to cripple and discourage both heart and mind of the young theologian. The philosophy of Leibnitz as modified by Wolf, the best at that time known, was there decried as fraught with poison for every pious soul. Ecclesiastical history was at the service of fanaticism, and, in its genuine sources, and its whole extent, was a thing unknown. Exegetical learning was regarded as superfluous, and hostile to real piety. Buxtorf's Jewish-Christians chimeras prevailed here, as elsewhere, with tyrannical sway. The philologist Doctor Michaelis spun out tedious etymologies, and put in requisition all his wits for the comparison of Greek and German words with Arabic and Hebrew roots, without employing his philological learning for the interpretation of the Bible, or for the improvement of theology. In didactic theology, Lange's *Oeconomia Salutis* was an oracle universally esteemed ; and in the department of Christian morals, they gave themselves up to an overstrained piety and an extravagant fanaticism. Whoever was dissatisfied with this state of things, or manifested a desire for more profound theological learning, was regarded as fallen from his first love, inasmuch as he wished to become wiser than his Saviour.

What direction could such a school afford to the young

* Life of Michaelis in Beyer's Magazine for Preachers, B. II. Art. 6, p. 2. Reiske's Life, p. 7.

theologian? What literary provision for the future life of letters? What seeds for future developement? Michaelis left this school, as was naturally to be expected, mis-educated, miserably furnished, both in mind and heart; in a state of genuine literary and moral starvation. Baumgarten, indeed, whom the Orphan house had assisted to obtain the theological professorship, that he might in this situation promulgate his faith, was at that time, to the scandal of the Christian brethren, fallen from grace, and was engaged in teaching a philosophical and synoptical theology. Michaelis however could not entirely fancy this theology, and was not yet disposed to draw from the prolific source, which soon after proved so productive for many of the greatest theologians of the present day. It was a happy circumstance for the mind of Michaelis, that his prudent father still cherished in his bosom a fondness for the ancient classics, and still further confirmed it by the instruction he was called to give in this department at the Orphan house; and also, that he placed within his hands, for his individual study, the metaphysics of Wolf, and afforded him an opportunity of receiving oral instruction in mathematics, natural philosophy, and history. The direction which Chancellor Louis communicated to his mind, in the last mentioned department, was retained by him during the whole course of his life. As a theologian, however, he terminated his course at the university with his head full of prejudices, sadly deficient in genuine, theological, and exegetical learning, and, as is very manifest from some printed letters which were written about that time, deeply tinctured with the extravagance and fanaticism before alluded to, which entwined itself with his very nature.

A man whose education has been thus perverted, must, if he would not remain for ever useless, turn himself about and form himself entirely anew. I should not be able to mention a single individual of his proper contemporaries, those, to wit, who were mis-educated as he was, who felt, as he did, the necessity of his change, (for Baumgarten was somewhat earlier;) still less should I be able to point out an individual of this school at large,

who has actually undertaken thoroughly to reform himself. Michaelis took a direction which might afford an universal example. The prejudices of his earlier years, he succeeded, for the most part, in obliterating, at first in himself, and then in Germany. From an ignorant disciple of ignorant instructors, he became an immensely instructive teacher of others, both in his own and in other kindred departments, in Germany, and far beyond its limits. In regard to his overstrained piety, however, his reform did not succeed so well.

In this revolution, which affected his whole nature, his residence, during one year, in England, must claim the first share. On his return to Halle, in the year 1742, he prosecuted his lectures, as private teacher, with greater openness than formerly. The *awakened* soon discovered the great change that had been wrought in him, and rendered thanks to God, in secret ejaculations, that, by his call to Göttingen, they were rid of an apostate, from whom they had no new concessions to hope.*

What was begun in England was consummated in Göttingen, through the influence of the distinguished men into whose society he was thrown; in the year 1745; especially, if I correctly understand many passages of his writings, through the influence of Mosheim, Haller and Gesner. After a few years, (from about the year 1750,) he became what he continued to be through his whole life, a scholar, towards whom the eyes of half the world were directed. Ordinary men require a long time to reach their moderate elevation: great men rise always rapidly, formed, as it were, in the twinkling of an eye.

In no department did he deviate less from the direction he received at Halle, than in that of history; he advanced however further, with a manifest improvement. Through the influence of Chancellor Louis, of whom he spake, even in his latest years, with manifest pleasure, he had apprehended this department from a statistical point of view. But Louis certainly never had introduced him to the critical appreciation and discrimination of the ori-

* Semler's Life, Part I. p. 86.

ginal sources ; for he himself had scarcely dreamt as yet of historical criticism. But Michaelis advanced continually, resting on this sure support, from the time that he employed himself in his writings with historical investigations ; and he had, undoubtedly, at an earlier period, in his oral instructions, exercised this salutary criticism, at a time when it was much less frequent in Germany than it afterwards became ; for he manifests, from the very commencement, a decided familiarity with it in his writings. Whether he took the hint from earlier German works, which exhibit traces of a critical investigation of historical truth—from Gundling, for example, Mascov, Kohler, or even from its genuine originator, Peter Bayle ; or whether his own philosophical taste, entirely of itself, or perhaps from the most trivial suggestion of others, attained to this point of perfection, I am unable to decide.

It was during the first years of his public and active life, (in the year 1744,) that the Universal History appeared, by means of which, the name of Baumgarten, at that time universally revered, awakened an interest in this department throughout our country ; and gradually prepared the way for the revolution which, about twenty-five years afterwards, affected the study of history in Germany. It is manifest that by it Michaelis was led to extend his views from the history of individual kingdoms and states, to universal history ; that from the influence of this work, and from the observation of its gross offences against established truth, he arrived at that copiousness of ideas concerning history, which, through the medium of a school of oriental and exegetical learning, contributed to the earliest formation of some of the most eminent historical scholars of Germany.

Had it been his fate to labour principally in this department, he certainly would have formed, of himself, that epoch in the study of history, to which, as it was, he contributed only at a distance ; and would have united, in a close and amicable manner, inquiries after historical truth with a pragmatical mode of presenting them. His notions on this subject were, to say the least, perfectly correct, pure, and manly ; equally averse from the affec-

tations of many modern, reputed writers of this class, and from the coarseness, stiffness, and pedantry with which most of our earlier historians have disgraced this noble department. But in regard to the merit of the ancient classical historians, in this respect, he was unjust in his decision, when he derided their interwoven orations. In our times, and in Germany, this pragmatical manner of presenting historical truths, would be, decidedly, a ridiculous affectation; but was it so in its own times, and in its origin? Eloquent statesmen were at that time the writers of history. Was it not natural, that in the midst of simple narration, they should be carried away into debate? Did they not describe revolutions which originated under the constant influence of this political eloquence? It is universally acknowledged to be a master-stroke of historical composition, to convert the readers into contemporaries of the delineated events, by means of the plan and copiousness of the narration; and to place the objects before them, in such a manner, that every thing may unfold itself before their eyes in its actual progress. Could better means have been devised for effecting this delusion, than the machinery of political eloquence? Had the ancient classical historians even the choice left of another form adapted to their nearest readers?

It is to be attributed solely to accident, under whose tyranny the scholar so often sighs, that Michaelis did not devote his life principally to history. His inclination and his talents were early determined that way. With it he had commenced his career as an university teacher; and he would have prosecuted the study uninterruptedly and with delight. But Münchhausen drew him aside from these pursuits, in order to reform, by means of him, the theology of Germany. Still, even in old age, he did not desert the friend of his youth. As a lover of history, he continued to range, without restraint, through her immeasurable fields; but as a profound inquirer, he limited himself solely to those districts which bordered the nearest on his own department; especially to the most ancient genealogy of nations—the most difficult point in

historical investigations ; which becomes continually more difficult and obscure the further we have to penetrate into antiquity ; which loses itself finally in a profound darkness, where a ray of genial light can scarcely penetrate. He was desirous of seeing a comparison of languages combined with the ancient traditions which we yet possess ; a noble thought of Leibnitz, adopted by Gundling, and applied by him, as far as his department permitted, imperfectly however, and like a novice, without a thorough insight into the peculiar nature of the languages. Being in the same place, and in connection with the same faculty, he was led soon after this, to an intimacy with Büttner, who was desirous of devoting the whole of his noiseless life to this thought of the German philosopher. The nearer connection with this learned philologist, strengthened and confirmed Michaelis in his design of illustrating, after this manner, the genealogical catalogue of Moses. The suggestions of Büttner are always, in the writings of Michaelis, designated by the mention of his name ; where this is not the case, we may rest assured we have the investigations of Michaelis himself. In his comparison of languages, he was never contented with a partial and frequently accidental resemblance between words ; but insisted, as was right, upon identity of grammatical structure, and regarded this alone as the most satisfactory proof of a kindred origin.

His historical and statistical views were expanded and improved into political reflections, at first through his long residence in England, and afterwards through his German contemporaries, who had awakened also in Germany a love for statistics and politics, by the success which attended their exertions to elevate them to permanent university sciences. It was now entirely in conformity with the spirit and plan of Michaelis, to keep pace with his contemporaries, in these pursuits also ; and to make the most worthy and noble use of these new and favourite sciences, for his own department, at a time when no other student of antiquities in Germany indulged a similar thought. In his "*Marriage Laws of Moses*," we see already the dawn which brightened into the

day of his "*Mosaical laws* ;" the plan, however, was conformed too much to a canonical theology, to permit a free political spirit to pervade it. This work, however, assisted to place him on the track, and served, at least, as a valuable preparation. For he advanced upon this from individual parts to the whole, and contemplated, in the spirit of Montesquieu, the legislative system and the political constitution of the Hebrews. The spirit of philosophical reflection vied, as it were, with his statistical, political and antiquarian researches, and led to the production of a work, in comparison with which, every earlier attempt, of a similar character, of antiquarians and politicians, dwindled into insignificance—an original work, with which we can scarcely compare a single work on any ancient or modern political constitution. Before his time, every thing on this subject had been thrown together promiscuously. Ancient laws and regulations interfered with modern ; genuine mosaic ordinances were mingled with spurious, which had been introduced, or new moulded, or certainly altered, partly by Persians, partly by Greeks, partly by Romans ; real laws alternated with the mere ordinances of individual Rabbins, which owed their origin, sometimes to an excessive solicitude, sometimes to an idle misapprehension. Credulity and political ignorance reigned in all their investigations and reflections. In the midst of this, Michaelis made his appearance. He commenced the work with historical criticism and a philosophical estimation of the original sources, and discarded every thing from which no genuine Mosaical institution could be obtained. He then removed the materials, to which, before his time, no eye but that of the antiquary had been directed, into a free political light ; at every portion of the constitution he penetrated into the nature of its origin, and then illustrated it from similar regulations of other nations. Reflections upon the object and design of the laws and upon their consequences, upon their utility and the contrary, were mingled with remarks upon their local or temporal adaptedness, and with many others of this character, which, according to circumstances, might af-

ford employment or even instruction to the philosopher and the politician, the historian and the antiquary. Before this time, none were seen to meddle with those subjects but the industrious students of antiquity ; now a philosophical critic familiarly acquainted with history and with politics was seen engaged in the pursuit. Before this time, blundering and credulous compilers ; now a keen and critical inquirer. Before this, an intolerable political jargon was seen to prevail ; now, political and philosophical reasoning. In this way he introduced sense and entertainment for the statesman, into a subject which, it was formerly believed, could furnish employment only to the timid, shy and secluded antiquary.

The work left but little more to be desired ; less with regard to individual parts, here and there something more in regard to the whole. Sometimes, however, it seems to stray away into foreign regions and times, and to speculate upon effects which, from the circumstances of the case, Moses could not have regarded ; sometimes we find, perhaps, a political castle in the air, without foundation, which the breath of historical criticism can demolish. And who does not regard this as perfectly natural and consistent with the progress of the human mind ? Is it not in conformity with the situation of an author, who is desirous of bringing into reputation a science which has been disgraced by unworthy treatment, and of animating with new life the old inanimate mass ? When industriously engaged in the search for political plans and designs, we are too prone to attribute to the law-giver secret plans and projects which never entered into his soul ; or we connect, too refinedly, into a political system, those laws whose connection is much more loose and vague. It is a happy circumstance that Michaelis has distributed with so lavish a hand ; we can now, more easily, remove what is superfluous. The humble tabernacle of Moses, with all its furniture, stands before us ; should any article be yet too splendid, we can easily supply its place with a meaner one ; the first erection of the building was the difficult and most important work. It remained perhaps, only to survey the

whole once more with an unbiassed regard to the times in which it originated, to other systems of legislation, which proceeded, perhaps, from the same point, and to the degree of culture which Moses really possessed ; and then in accordance with this, to appreciate the individual points. Thus revised, this portion of antiquity might be placed in the best possible light for the literature of our times. Posterity will provide for its own additional wants.

With his historical investigations, his geographical researches are closely connected. As far as it could be done, he placed the ancient names of countries and cities by the side of the modern ; he determined, more accurately than was usually done, their situation together with their boundaries ; and dwelt with pleasure upon their natural and political history. All his writings, it is true, abound with the results of these investigations ; but we may form an acquaintance with his geographical manner, most satisfactorily, from his explanations appended to *Abulfeda's Geographical Description of Egypt*, which connect together the ancient, middle, and modern geography of the country. In the prosecution of those favourite researches, he derived immediate advantage from the instructions he had formerly received at the university. The study of the mathematics, which are altogether indispensable to every scholar, whether speculative or practical, and which, when neglected, wreak, sooner or later, ample vengeance,—this study had not been slighted by Michaelis. He had at least so much general mathematical knowledge, that he was enabled to assist himself in his inquiries, in order to discover, to correct, and even to avoid the errors of others in this department. Finally, his statistical taste did not desert him here, but preserved his investigations from an insipid dryness.

Michaelis prosecuted for the greatest length of time, and in the most distinguished manner, his inquiries concerning the geographical and genealogical catalogue of Moses, (Gen. x.), and concerning the passages which bore any relation to this in the writings of the Hebrews. Bochart had led the way illustriously, for, as to what could be ob-

tained, in relation to the names in this catalogue, from the ancient classics, from translators of the Bible, and from Arabians, he had left but little remaining to be done. There was, however, one source of illustration, already partially laid open, to wit, the modern journeys in the East, which he had despised ; whereas he abounded in etymologies, and had frequently converted questions of history into purely etymological investigations. Finally, another abundant source of geographical discoveries, was, after Bochart, laid open by Assemann, of which no one as yet had been able to avail himself. Michaelis was determined now to ascertain how much light could be borrowed for this dark portion of antiquity from travels and from learned Syrians. He was desirous of examining critically the etymologies of Bochart, and of confining within narrower limits the use of the same in geographical investigations, and conforming these last again more nearly to the course of historical researches. A subordinate design also was to obliterate utterly the yet surviving notions of Rudbeck, according to which, information is to be found in Moses, concerning the origin of all the nations upon the wide earth, and in tracing the history of all nations we must commence our researches with Noah's ark. He limited therefore this catalogue to those nations which could be known to the Hebrews, through the medium of Arabia, Egypt and Phenicia, because in it were found merely names without explanation and accompanying places of residence ; consequently nothing can be found in it which was unknown to its first readers.

Not a word more has since been said on the idle fancies of Rudbeck. As to other questions, many have been fully settled, others nearly so, and for the decision of others abundant materials have been collected. Michaelis rejected the idle dream, that the genealogies of nations, like those of individuals, can be traced back to one original ancestor, and regarded therefore the names of this catalogue, not as the names of individual persons, but as the names of whole tribes.

This whole mode of proceeding seems to be philose-

phically correct, and probably met with universal approbation. Still, however, we cannot suppress within ourselves the doubt, whether this whole fragmentary relic has not been regarded too much in the light of modern times ; and whether the want of uniformity in the mode of explaining and handling it, does not oppose this view of it. At the commencement, the names are regarded as the names of individual persons, (Noah, Shem, Ham, and Japheth) ; the succeeding names, although similarly constructed, are to be considered as the names of whole tribes ; Gomer for example, of the Galatians ; Madai, of the Medes ; and Javan, of the Greeks. Is it not purely capricious, to treat similarly constructed names in so different a manner ? Sometimes indeed, a city, a province, and a country bear the name of the individual. In the instance before us, however, this would have been the case in a long list of names of a whole genealogical table. How much probability then can this hypothesis claim for its support ?

All this conducts us to another question, viz. whether the genealogical inquiries of nations, in their infancy, have not proceeded on the supposition, that every nation was to be derived from an original ancestor of the same name ; and whether the names of such original ancestors were not first suggested by the names of the nations themselves. Mankind collectively were regarded as the descendants of one individual : and, in conformity with this, every nation was regarded as a smaller family, whose genealogical catalogue terminated also in the name of a single individual. The ancients regarded with admiration the depth of wisdom to which they had attained by this happy thought, and contrived a childish hypothesis under which to range some traditions which had been inherited by them. It was an hypothesis, however, fully consistent with the early childhood of historical investigations. Do we not daily, in all the sciences, construct in the same manner, hypotheses, out of the materials of our present thoughts ? And why should we ridicule them, unmindful that a wiser posterity may also ridicule us ? The genealogical table of Moses furnishes us with an ex-

position of the names of countries and of tribes known at that day. The ancient traditions were here made use of, and were laid at the foundation. These traditions are still extant. We receive them with gratitude from the hand of time, and we connect them, as far as practicable, with other traditions ; but a man must be a dreamer indeed, who would search in them for correct geographical and genealogical information.

A fondness for more accurate geographical knowledge, and for his principal department, that of oriental learning, awakened in Michaelis the desire of possessing a better acquaintance with the moral, physical, and geographical situation of Arabia Felix. The defectiveness of the descriptions of this country, hitherto published, was attributed to the defective preparations of those whom mere accident had thrown into Arabia. Unacquainted with that which the scholar especially desires to know, and ignorant of what yet remains to be investigated, they had furnished merely what came within their notice, unsought, and uninvestigated ; whereas, he alone returns richly laden from a journey, who entered upon it well supplied. It so happened that Michaelis was enabled to communicate his wishes to Count Bernstorff, an illustrious minister of state, and a man of cultivated science, who succeeded in procuring for them the encouragement of his King. The proposition of a learned expedition, previously prepared, and at the royal expense, was acceded to by the King of Denmark ; and Michaelis was entrusted with all the necessary preparations—a royal reward for a successful and bold proposition, which contributed to spread, far and wide, the fame of Michaelis. The notoriety of the expedition ; the number of scholars selected to accompany it, who embraced within their little circle the noblest departments of knowledge ; the complete literary outfit ; the instructions, composed with prudent foresight, and sanctioned by the royal authority ; the invitations to the most celebrated Academies and Societies to take part in the expedition, by means of queries—all these circumstances spread the name of Michaelis far beyond the limits of his own country. Besides all this, he

crowned the reputation which accrued to him from these causes, by the questions which he furnished for these learned travellers ; many of which, owing to their matter and compass, might be denominated instructive treatises, rather than learned questions. They referred mostly to the physical portion of Biblical antiquity, yet so obscure ; the names, to wit, and nature, of the beasts, plants, trees, and precious stones, which, as objects of science and as serving to illustrate many obscure passages in the Hebrew writings, could not but awaken a spirit of investigation. The exuberance of knowledge displayed by these questions in diverse branches of learning, at that time not expected in a philologist, proved, for the first time, to Germany, what Michaelis was. And as the work was at the same time published in French, it procured for him abroad also the fame of a most comprehensive scholar, whose reputation extended even to Spain. France now endeavoured to appropriate him to herself. The Academy of Inscriptions at Paris included him, for the present, in the number of their foreign correspondents, until they could reward him with a more distinguished honour, the situation of a *membre étranger*, the number of whom, at any one time, was restricted to eight. Seldom has such an honourable and rich reward followed so immediately upon desert, after so short a contest with envy. The reward, in this instance, was received from the hands of a king, from a foreign land, and from the noblest families abroad, who are seldom influenced by the most wily operations of a crafty jealousy, restricted, as it is in its effects, to the narrow circle of its pitiful connections in its own country.

If this literary expedition, with its extraordinary preparations, and the propitious circumstance of royal support, has not answered the expectations of all, the blame was certainly not to be attributed to the originator, but solely to the tyranny of accident and of death, which removed, in the midst of the journey, all excepting one of the scholars who were selected to accompany it. Niebuhr, however, has exceeded the proudest expectations ; and his productions, on occasion of this journey, out-

weigh, in intrinsic importance, half a library of other travels in these lands.

Of these and the earlier travels in the East, Michaelis made a diligent use, for the purposes of Biblical learning. In pursuance of this object, he trod the path which others had already trodden before him ; he pursued it, however, further, and in his own peculiar way. It had been observed already, before his time, that the manners and customs, such as they are represented by the Old Testament, from the time of the patriarchs downward, might receive more or less elucidation from the manners and customs of other nations of entirely different origin and language, and under entirely different climates,—from notices of America, India, Greenland, &c. The earlier collectors had thrown together into a promiscuous heap, resemblances, wherever they discovered them, without distinction of country or people. That much of this was apposite, was not to be denied ; but Michaelis, accustomed to historical criticism, could not regard this mixture with approbation. He separated and discriminated, and without inquiring whence this resemblance in the case of nations so different in their origin, and under climates so various, might proceed ; perhaps also because no ready solution of this difficulty suggested itself, he limited this mode of illustration entirely to the East and to the Semitic nations. By this mode of proceeding, the exegetical use of the travels became, to say the least, more sure ; and, so long as it was only calculated for individual passages, it was certainly well founded. But in thus narrowing the limits, an important consideration escaped his otherwise so philosophical eye, to wit, the genuine source of the observed resemblances. He regarded them, perhaps, as merely accidental : an accident however which obtains so uniformly and extensively, can no longer be regarded as an accident. Thus the observation presses itself upon us, that a similar situation in regard to civilization and intellect, would lead us to expect a similar intellectual and moral character, and similar manners and customs ; and that, if left to themselves, and undisturbed by foreign influence in their progress towards refinement,

mankind universally elevate themselves according to the same laws, and advance by steps universally ascertained and well defined. This observation, confirmed by the progress of human culture in every period of history, seems to open entirely new avenues to remote antiquity ; and to conduct to results by which we are enabled, as it seems, to penetrate much deeper than formerly into the spirit of the Hebrew writings.

The Old Testament, when Michaelis engaged in the study of it, was shrouded in the darkness which Buxtorf had thrown around it. The day, it is true, that might have dispersed it, had already, a long time before, dawned upon Halle ; but it enlightened there the eyes of no student of the Bible. They thought, instructed, and wrote, as if they still lived in the midst of the deep darkness of that earlier night. A Bible with various readings had been printed at Halle, in the year 1720, and notwithstanding the use of the whole noble apparatus, they adhered still pertinaciously to the infallibility of the vulgar text. They had in their possession collations exhibiting various departures from the punctuation of the printed text ; and still they adhered obstinately to the divinity and absolute correctness of every point in the printed Bible. They had discovered, upon investigation, and exposed to view in this edition of the Bible, the contradictions of the Massora—the most satisfactory evidence of their fallibility ; and yet they had sworn, in as solemn a manner, to the absolute infallibility of the same, as they had sworn to their symbolical articles. They were verily blinded by the excess of light.

Michaelis, on his first appearance as a public teacher, was full, to overflowing, of this faith of his fathers. In the year 1739, he decked out, after his fashion, in a dissertation “ *de punctorum hebraicorum antiquitate*” the whole fallacy of the so denominated divinity and sanctity of the Hebrew punctuation system, in all its extent. In the year 1740, he came forward in the disputation, *de Psalmo xxii.* as an advocate of the infallibility of the entire text ; and sought to establish anew the Jewish paralogisms, which before that time had been publicly defend-

ed. His journey abroad shook in no respect this faith received from his fathers : for the same chimeras, adapted to palsy both mind and soul, prevailed yet in England and Holland. Nay, in the year 1745, he composed a Hebrew Grammar, in which he arrayed in defence of this superstition, as it became a bold champion in the service, the whole host of grammatical sophistries. Had he continued to live and teach a longer time in Halle, he would still, for a long time, have remained of this sentiment ; for it would have raised there a frightful storm, and perhaps have cost even a martyrdom to the cause of Biblical criticism, to have declared himself publicly the advocate of another faith.

He came to Göttingen. He had lived, and taught, and prosecuted his studies here scarcely for the space of five years, remote from the constraining influence of the faith of the pious Jewish-Christian party, when all these prejudices took their flight. This mental crisis may be dated somewhere in the period from 1750 to 1752. We find him, since that time, fully engaged in critical philological studies, under the guidance of enlightened principles ; and preparing the way for that revolution which, from about the year 1760, he was enabled to effect in the department of biblical criticism and exegesis.

Until this time, the study of the Oriental languages had been prosecuted in Germany, almost without an object and with the most contracted partiality. At one time there reigned among the scholars of this department, a slavish deference for the Rabbinical Lexicon ; at another, a capricious changing and transposing of consonants, in order to unravel the meaning of an obscure word ; at another, mere conjecture, as to the meaning, from the connection of the words : always, however, a blind confidence in tradition. A few only—perhaps no one in Germany, studied the known Shemitic languages, in the connection in which Castell had previously set an illustrious example ; and those who followed him yet at a distance, followed him at least in his less satisfactory steps. This department received finally a distinguished assistance from two learned men, from Kromeyer, a German superintendent

and philologist ; and from the celebrated Albert Schultens ; both of whom made an excellent use of the Arabic in their Hebrew inquiries ; the former, as a scholar, in a small provincial town, with scanty and inconsiderable assistance ; the latter, with incomparably greater effect, as an university scholar, in the neighbourhood of the Leyden-library, abounding in manuscripts. Halle brought at length the Oriental languages into a closer union and connection with one another, than other German universities ; in which the Missionary institutions also had a remote share. The learned Doctor Michaelis was already more extensively and perfectly acquainted with them than the rest of his known contemporaries, but he manifested an attachment to many idle notions, and to etymological drudgery, which as soon as it is elevated to the principal rank, cripples both mind and soul of a philologist.

Michaelis brought with him, from the instructive school of his father, a multitude of nice philological observations — the richest portion which, as a theologian, he had received from the university. But it required years of time to digest them ; to separate the dross from the gold ; and to introduce, into the whole study of the languages, more philosophy, and derive from it more abundant advantage for the Old Testament. During the first ten years of his residence in Göttingen, he seems to have devoted his attention principally to the genuine sources of Hebrew philology, and to the writings of Albert Schultens. A result of this was his "*critical examination of the means of becoming acquainted with the Hebrew language*," which appeared in the year 1756, in which we everywhere discover the industrious and docile disciple of Schultens. In his critical course of instruction, he had conceived, in the year 1759, the design, among others, of further explaining the rules he had there expounded, by means of more abundant examples and proofs, drawn from his own researches. In the same year appeared, also, his work on the influence of languages upon the opinions of men, in which he elevated philological inquiries to the rank of philosophical investigations. In this spirit he continued his philological researches, without interruption, into his latest years ; he engaged in them, however, only occa-

sionally and individually, as was necessary, in order not thereby to oppress the mind. He scattered through all his writings a great portion of his results. In the evening of his days, he had leisure to collect and revise them, and to present the full and mature results of his long research—the philological harvest of almost half a century—in his “*Supplements ad Lexica Hebreæa*,” which work was left by him nearly completed, and is now almost through the press.* They form an acute, perpetual criticism upon the earlier Hebrew Dictionaries; upon the significations which they adopt; and upon the genealogies which they exhibit, composed according to the principles which he had adopted for himself in his years of maturity. How correct soever his theory may be considered, in regard to the application of it, we may still frequently differ in opinion. In his solicitude to avoid, in the comparison of Oriental dialects, a capricious change and transposition of letters, he despised it even in those cases, where Albert Schultens had already defended it from the charge of caprice by unobjectionable examples. He thus deprived himself of a valuable assistance, in the case of Hebrew words, which occur but seldom, or only once. His want of confidence in establishing the meanings from the connection, seems frequently to have withdrawn his attention from this connection, and to have led him to the adoption of meanings entirely at variance with it, drawn from the Oriental dialects. His confidence in the more correct philological views of the old translators of the Bible, in the case of difficult or rare words, seems frequently too unlimited, and not adequately moderated by the suspicion, which a bare inspection frequently confirms, that they, in such cases, might have been no better off than ourselves. These however are spots which ought not to come into consideration, when regarding such a master work; and serve, at most, to show that even the most vigilant attention sometimes flags in a work so barren and discouraging, and so oppressive both to soul and body. We are astonished rather, when we follow him step by step, at the admirable fidelity and care with which he availed himself of his sources; we are astonish-

* Published in 6 Parts, at Göttingen, in 1792.

ed, not that errors or inadvertencies sometimes surprise him, but that they have not much oftener surprised him ; that his ardent and vivacious mind, with such assiduity, perseverance and patience, was able to endure so oppressive, dry and meagre an employment. In his remarkably acute, critical, and correct use of those sources which were accessible to him, what could we have wished more, than that a free access had been permitted him to all. For this purpose, however, he must have lived in a place abounding with manuscripts, and not at Göttingen. As it was, he could extend his philological illustrations, drawn from the Oriental dialects, no further than the printed dictionaries enabled him. Neither Golius, however, nor Castell, nor Giggeo, nor yet the contributions of the richer Arabic scholars, even when gathered from their writings with the utmost care, suffice for the accurate and thorough survey of the various significations of Arabic words. It is frequently impossible to understand them satisfactorily, without the aid of Janhāri, and Fīrāzahād, much less, then, to make use of them. Here a wide field, which promises a rich harvest, spreads itself before those scholars who have access to these sources. He performed what in his situation was possible; and he performed much ; let others, in more favourable circumstances, accomplish more.

When entering, however, upon an inheritance, how rich soever it may be, the heirs may still have some wishes remaining. For the enlarging and enriching, therefore, of these lexicographical treasures, we could have wished that, in his latter years, before delivering over to the public this illustrious bequest, he had revised again the rich philological works of a Pocock, a Schultens, a Schröder, &c. in order, again, after the additional experience of so many years spent in philological studies, to estimate critically what, before this, he had despised. As it now is, his opinions clash with theirs in many instances where truth seems to incline to their side.

His accurate grammatical knowledge of the Syriac and Arabic, is abundantly attested by his grammars of those languages. Although in the theoretical part, they exhibit

but little that is new, after the thorough *Syriasmus* of Doctor Michaelis, and after the labours of Erpenius and of Schultens; still, they recommend themselves by clearness, and by a more intelligible exhibition of grammatical rules: and, in the historical part, by the results of nice investigations, in which other grammarians had not yet employed their minds, or for the prosecution of which they had not yet access to the original sources. His edition of *Castell's Syriac Lexicon* proves that, in his Syriac studies, he had advanced with his age; and his *Abulfeda on Egypt* shews that, next to Reiske, the greatest Arabic scholar of modern times, he has acquired the most deserved reputation as an expounder of the Arabic text of the Geographer.

Of the criticism of the Old Testament in Germany, he must be considered in the most proper sense of the word, the father. Before the appearance of the dissertations of Kennicott in the year 1752, the thought of a critical mode of proceeding in relation to the Old Testament, seems never to have been awakened in his bosom. Up to that time, at least, all his writings take for granted the absolute correctness of his text. It needed however only the feeble essay of Kennicott for this purpose, and Michaelis was immediately upon the right track; perhaps even on a better track than Kennicott himself. He was already fully ripe and prepared for such a direction; and, in all probability, he would, without the aid of Kennicott, in a short time, have adopted it of himself.

A short examination of the labours of his predecessors, convinced him where they failed in the critical treatment of the Old Testament. Capell was too bold, too deficient in industry, too ignorant of the Oriental languages; Kennicott, too much a novice in every thing pertaining to the business, too deficient in all the preparatory branches, and, notwithstanding his manifest ignorance, too presumptuous and too much inclined to alterations; Houbignant, too slightly acquainted with the Hebrew grammar, too lavish of his bold conjectures, too sparing of various readings, which, however, he might have furnished merely from the Paris manuscripts. Time has confirmed

the correctness of these opinions. Who has now, after the lapse of nearly forty years, any hesitation fully to subscribe to them?

In order to repair, as far as possible, this deficiency, and to expedite the progress of the criticism of the Old Testament, he commenced immediately a course of critical lectures on selected passages of the Old Testament, and published, a few years after, in the year 1759, as a specimen of the same, his critical course on the three most important Psalms concerning Christ. This production only verifies our experience, that we must first be accustomed to walk before we can walk safely. Thus every thing here also remained in its natural order. The attempt, however, attracted the universal attention which it deserved. No work, on the Old Testament, in any language, could be compared with it in richness, profundity and originality. Philological and critical learning tendered jointly their aid: the significations of the difficult words were etymologically investigated and classed, and the illustrations of the older translators collectively used for this purpose; the explanations both of words and of things, of the most esteemed Rabbins, were examined; the various readings of the manuscripts and old editions, as far as they were accessible at that time, were appreciated and exhibited, for such various readings might be sought for and estimated from the older translators. He even ventured upon conjectures, and found himself in the full use of all those critical and exegetical sources from which he continued afterwards, but with more solid experience, to draw. The completeness of the critical and exegetical apparatus, and a careful appreciation of it, were the principal objects of regard with him, in order to furnish in his work a model for future critical illustrations of the Old Testament.

Only a small portion, therefore,—three Psalms of moderate compass,—was subjected to a critical examination, so that the materials in all their extent could easily be surveyed at once; and the Psalms themselves were wisely selected. The theologians recovered from their panic. They had trembled lest the criticism of the Old Testa-

ment, now awaking from its slumbers, should subvert ~~the~~ doctrine, and exhibit another history of the Creation, another history of the Fall, and another doctrine concerning Christ. On the contrary, they found in this first critical essay on three Psalms pertaining to the Messiah, that from the assistance of criticism, even a confirmation of the system might be expected. And was not this the most glorious recommendation which this new science could receive on its first introduction to the public?

He longed for the appearance of Kennicott's collection of various readings from Masoretic manuscripts, the departures of which from the vulgar text seemed to be so numerous, that he was led to indulge sanguine expectations from this collection, in regard to the rectification of the Hebrew text. He indulged also the hope, that among the multitude of manuscripts collated, some, at least, of high antiquity, might be found, or transcripts of the same, of equal value. He promised himself, by means of them, the purification of the text from the most obvious errors of the transcribers; numerous corrections of the punctuation, if attention should ever be directed to the subject, as it then was to the consonants; and a system of criticism for the Old Testament, as well established and as sure, as that for the New. As it was not the business of Germany to encourage the undertaking, as the British did, by pecuniary contributions, he did as essential service to the cause, by awakening an enthusiasm in its favour. His word availed everywhere. Every one looked with longing expectations towards England. Men who had nothing to do with various readings, talked now of such collections. No name was more frequently mentioned than that of Kennicott. The enthusiasm impelled many to take part in the collation; for they ventured to hope, that the highly prized immortality of their names would be secured in the immortal work of Kennicott. In this manner Michaelis inspirited the collators, in so barren an employment; and encouraged the zeal of Kennicott himself, and of his coadjutors. The result has not answered the great expectations that were formed; on the contrary, it has very much depreciated in our view.

the value of the Masoretic manuscripts. It was well, however, that the contrary opinion formerly prevailed. To this error we are indebted for what we now possess. Michaelis himself, after the appearance of Kennicott's collection of various readings, acknowledged the poverty of the Masoretic manuscripts, and estimated them at no higher rate than they really deserve. Under the pressure of age, he made a use of the collective body of various readings, which only a few as yet had made. He traced the mutual relationship of the manuscripts among one another; investigated their connection with the Massora, passage by passage; and ascertained the value of individual readings.

Thus he continued to employ himself unceasingly in critical investigations even to his latest day, and remained always at the head of his contemporaries. The greatest number of his critical observations on the Hebrew text, are found in his *Oriental Magazine*, where he specifies the readings adopted or not adopted by him, with the grounds on which he proceeded. They constitute a rich collection of acute and ingenious conjectures, intermingled with a goodly number of emendations, which will doubtless maintain their ground against the assaults of time and a more improved criticism. Granting that conjectures and emendations are also exhibited, which might apparently have been dispensed with, which are rendered improbable by the connection, and by an accurate knowledge of the language, or by the period of the Hebrew literature to which the emended portion belongs; still, they continue to be, in another respect, valuable, by presenting inducements to the interpreter to remove the difficulties, by a better interpretation, by a satisfactory explanation drawn from the kindred dialects, or by any other method; and thus to render the further assistance of criticism unnecessary. We now possess, from the hand of Michaelis, a brief specimen of criticism on approved principles, applied to all the writings of the Old Testament. May others, who in future devote their attention to these writings themselves, or to his labours, continue to follow his example, and proceed with the same critical

judgment, correcting and completing them, advancing further, with more acuteness and certainty; first illustrating and then using the sources of criticism, and cherishing continually those nobler and more elevated aims, for which his age was not yet ripe. It is long continued exercise alone, and the matured experience accruing from this, which establish the course of criticism, and sharpen and correct the critical tact. Michaelis led the way and furnished the most noble contributions. If we have not attained this critical tact, the blame must rest with ourselves.

Of a work, in which he aimed to rise from mere verbal criticism, to one of a higher character, viz. his *complete Introduction to the Old Testament*, we have been deprived by his advanced age and his death—a serious loss, provided the materials for it should not be found among his papers, which, even in a fragmentary condition, would be worthy of publication. In the first part, which is already in our hands, on Moses and on Job, he could only revise his earlier investigations in relation to these writings, arrange them differently, and thus present them under a new aspect. In the volumes yet to follow, we may anticipate a rich harvest of original observations. This is probably the only work which he has left unfinished. It is the commencement of a great building, which serves to remind us that the experienced architect is no more.

His philological merits in regard to the New Testament are not so great as those in regard to the Old. In the latter he was under the necessity of creating every thing for himself, but in the former he could only help forward the good work already begun. Before his time, scholars, misled by commentators, drew their philological illustrations, for the most part, from the ancient classical authors of early Greece, from Homer, Herodotus, Thucydides and Xenophon, &c. About his time, Otte, Carpzov, Krebs and others, directed the attention to the Alexandrian school, and opened, for the first time, the genuine source of illustration. Michaelis was faithful to this source. In the Epistle to the Hebrews, the history

of the Resurrection, and the first book of the Maccabees, he resorted most cheerfully to Philo, Josephus, the Septuagint, and the other Greek writers on the Old Testament, and kindly assisted Ernesti in promoting the good cause. His own contributions consisted of frequent comparisons of Syriac, Chaldaic and Talmudic words and expressions with the Greek, which none of his predecessors or contemporaries had furnished in such abundance, and for which purpose no individual had been able to use the collections of Wetstein in so masterly a manner. But where deep and extensive knowledge of the Greek was requisite, Ernesti and other moderns may have excelled him.

For the criticism, however, properly speaking, of the New Testament, in Germany, we are indebted for the most part to Michaelis: he received it poor and uncultivated; he left it rich and matured.

Down to the middle of the present century, the criticism of the New Testament was decried by almost all the German theologians. With what violence did the theological cabal attack even the pious Albert Bengel, when he first endeavoured to introduce it! How timidly did the father of Michaelis come forward in his work *de Variis N. T. lectionibus*! How poor and imperfect does it appear, even in the year 1750, in Michaelis' *Introduction to the New Testament*!

Still his heart doated upon this youthful work with the affection of a parent; he cherished and nourished it till his latest days, and thus it received at last its fixed and manly form. It would be unjust and ungrateful to inquire what it was at first. It is now what its title declares it to be, *an Introduction to the Study of the New Testament*, furnishing an easy general survey of the points of principal moment, in the criticism of the same, indispensable to every theologian—a genuine magazine of critical learning. Whatever was agitated, before and at the time of Michaelis, in relation to the criticism of the New Testament, with the exception of a few hypotheses, may be found here discussed, with a constant regard to the original sources; so that, under his hands, they become pro-

perly the results of his own study, deprived only of the merit of having been first announced by him. We see here recorded the history of his opinions, and of his progressive study of the New Testament ; we see him here wavering, fluctuating, weighing, conjecturing and erring, until he arrived at the point which he thought he could maintain ; we see here discussions in which, at every step, he subjected himself as well as others to a rigid criticism. The style of the work, it is true, is rendered thus more broken and heavy ; but it becomes, on the other hand, more instructive for every one who wishes to commence his acquaintance with such investigations.

To him we are indebted for many new results. He dwelt, with the most pleasure, on the merits of the principal manuscripts and of the older translations. He furnishes here a rich supply of original observations, and displays his critical talents in all their excellence. For an example, we need only turn to his investigations concerning the Syriac translations ; which are so novel, so rich, and so fruitful in inferences for every scholar in this department. Even where he pursues some favourite hypothesis of his own, which can hardly stand the test of criticism,—as in the case of the Hebrew original text of the Epistle to the Hebrews,—still, those who differ from him on the main point, will find other subordinate investigations, abounding in useful instruction, which we would gladly receive from his hand.

For a long time, however, he appears to have acted unjustly and ungratefully towards Semler, his profound and critical contemporary ; and toward the bold elevation which he had given to criticism. But in his latter days he exonerated himself from this reproach, and discarded a number of notions which he had cherished during nearly half a century. The edition of his *Introduction*, prepared in the year 1788, estimates justly, together with Semler, the real value of the so styled Latinising manuscripts, and the high antiquity of their text. It purports to be an abstract of critical proceedings adapted to certain principal divisions of the general subject ; made, however, in a peculiar manner, as Michaelis himself had

always practised it. It establishes, also, more firmly than had heretofore been done, the authority of some of the writings of the New Testament ; those, for example, of Mark and of Luke. Thus the mind of Michaelis, contrary to the usual course of things, remained, even in his old age, so pliant as to admit an entire change of his early ideas.

The same critical materials might, it is true, in our day, have been disposed of in a more novel, free, and summary manner ; it is questionable, however, whether we should have obtained the same rich store of original results. But a capital consideration, which should not have been disregarded, has unfortunately been overlooked by Michaelis, viz. the inquiry into the religious notions of the Jews at the time of Christ and the Apostles, which would have enabled him to have seen, more satisfactorily, how Christianity arose out of Judaism ; with what wisdom Christ and the Apostles conducted themselves in the first establishment and promulgation of our religion ; how they connected their new doctrines with the old ones ; where they adhered to the old path ; where they advanced farther ; and where they moulded every thing anew. In the present state of these researches, the distance between the Old and the New Testament, and the transition from the one to the other, appear too great.

Sound exegesis was a thing unknown when Michaelis commenced his career. It was even inferior to that which prevailed two centuries before.

At the period of the Reformation, all the arts of interpretation were in full exercise—a natural consequence of the enthusiasm, with which the study of the ancient classics had been prosecuted for nearly a century. This state of things was succeeded by the arts of controversy. Barbarism, however, as might naturally be expected, reigned in all the departments of theology, until within about fifty years of the present day. Grotius, indeed, who had grown up in the study of the ancient classics, made an effort to restore this state of things ; but his mild and benevolent voice was drowned amidst the barbarous yells of the German theologians, led on by Salov.

Meanwhile the study of the ancient languages was revived. The oriental languages established themselves at Halle, in the very school from which Michaelis came. But they lent no aid to the exegesis of the Bible. What was only the means, was regarded as the end. Philological learning was sought for, merely for its own sake, as if no nobler use of it could be conceived. An idle rummaging among words, tedious etymologies, and grammatical speculations, afforded the principal gratification. The philologists knew not how to turn their treasure to advantage. If they applied them to the Bible, they busied themselves eternally with mere words and phrases and syllabification, and laid immense stress upon every syllable, which was certainly never intended by the original author. They had not even a remote apprehension of that which gives life and fruitfulness to the business of interpretation, viz. penetrating views of the peculiarities of the ancient language, and of the course and connection of the thoughts in any work; the development of these from the spirit of the times, and from the character and prevailing sentiments of every period. As to the didactic theologians, they occupied too proud a station in their lordly systems, to condescend to enter the humble abodes of philology. They adhered to Luther's translation, and expounded it—the genuine protestant Vulgate of those days.

The progress of deism, which was sounding, throughout England, its loud scoffs at all positive religion, at length constrained the British theologians to defend their territories by means of a better study of the Bible. But they had among them, at that time, no philologist who could commence with grammatical-philological explanations. Their sagacity, however, provided a remedy. The significations of the words, and the sense of the whole, were elicited by an acute analysis of the whole connection; and the results were comprehended in verbose, and diffuse paraphrases—the most effectual method of concealing their ignorance of the original language, from themselves and others.

With this sort of exegesis, Michaelis became acquainted, during his residence in England. With all its imper-

fections, it was still more rich and instructive than the miserable mode which prevailed in his own country; and he thought it, therefore, worthy of imitation in Germany. To commence, he furnished Latin translations of English paraphrasts; of Benson, on James, in the year 1746; of Pierce, on the Epistle to the Hebrews, in the year 1747. He then proceeded to paraphrases of his own. In the year 1750, appeared his paraphrase of the minor epistles of Paul; in the year 1751, his poetical paraphrase of Ecclesiastes; and in the year 1762, his paraphrase of the epistle of Paul to the Hebrews. This mode of exegesis was now fairly introduced into Germany, and remained in favour till Michaelis led the way again to a new one. No one was sooner convinced of its inconveniences and its unhappy consequences. It is too easily satisfied with remote philological evidences in support of the adopted meaning, and leads us astray from accurate grammatical interpretation, which alone can furnish satisfactory results; it makes no distinction between the ideas of the paraphrased author, and those of the paraphrast, and the reader is in danger of mistaking the latter for the former; it obliterates also all the spirit of the author, and communicates a spirit not his own. Michaelis, therefore, began with improving the English mode, and accompanied his paraphrases with rich philological observations, which especially adorn his epistle to the Hebrews; he finally abandoned it entirely, and preferred, what was decidedly better, accurate translations with explanatory observations.

The Germans, under his guidance, began again to interpret the Scriptures for themselves; to elicit their meaning, as was customary at the time of the Reformation, by means of grammatical interpretation; and also to investigate them historically, from the spirit of those ancient times, from history, antiquities, customs, opinions, and modes of thinking, and to furnish materials, thus approved, for a systematic theology. In the criticism of the Old Testament, he continued to lead the way alone; in that of the New Testament, however, he found in Ernesti, an active coadjutor.

With his *Commentary on the Bible*, if regarded in the

proper light, commences a new period of Biblical exegesis. If I mistake not, the translation was merely a subordinate concern ; the observations constitute the principal and by far the richest portion of which the translation was only the vehicle.

The circumstances of the times, and the nature and compass of the work, prevented him from giving his translation a substantial and classical form. The period in which he was educated, was ill adapted to communicate to his German style, any degree of conciseness, flexibility and skill. After he had improved it, it was still too verbose for the concisely descriptive poetry of the Hebrews, and too fond of measured periods for their prose. In the poetry, he failed in a due measure of vigour and fulness ; in the prose, he was deficient in thorough simplicity. A tasteful translation, however, is seldom the production of a philologist, absorbed in critical labours and buried amongst various readings. Weary and dispirited with his wanderings in the sandy desert of criticism, which must, of necessity, be passed ; he must nevertheless elevate his mind with unwonted freedom, in order to conceive and express, in another language, every new shade of meaning in the ancient author, whose language differs from his so widely in spirit and character. A thorough proficient in the ancient languages, he must display an equal proficiency in modern languages also, in order to keep pace with his author in feeling, thinking, and expression. Abounding in learned philological researches, he must nevertheless lay aside his wealth, and find his greatness in a poverty and simplicity, to which he is not accustomed. How could a teacher at the university, occupied with a daily round of laborious employments, submit himself to the necessary task of examining, with rigid scrutiny, every word, in order to remain faithful to the original in their choice and collocation ; and to communicate to the translation the same distribution of light and shade as the original possesses. And should he succeed in reconciling this with his ordinary employments, in a small portion of the Bible, could he be expected to make the sacrifice throughout the whole ?

"The learned interpreter is altogether a different person from the tasteful translator. The former amasses treasures for the use of the latter, that he may turn them to advantage in his own way. Each receives, however, his merited reward.

"The design of the translation of Michaelis, according to, was merely to present, connectedly and comprehensively, the Hebrew writings, in the sense in which he understood them, and which he aimed to elicit, passage by passage, so that his readers might carry it along with them to the observations. To these he directed his principal exertions. In these he illustrated his text from manners and customs, from antiquities, and from natural and political history, with a fulness which could be expected only from the most erudite and comprehensive scholar. He then indulges in reflections on the intellectual and moral character of the ancient times; and on the doctrines and systems of faith which owe their origin to these times; and on moral and political maxims: which reflections evinced the scholar familiar with the ancient as well as the modern world, the experienced philosopher, politician and moralist, and the skilful theologian, all combined in one man. That portion, however, was the most important and the most abundant in original views, which derived its illustrations from antiquities, geography and modern travels. Here Michaelis was in his element. He was not so well versed in the intellectual and moral character of the ancient world. He conceived of those times, as in a condition of high intellectual and scientific cultivation. The Hebrew poets, especially, he considered as in possession of comprehensive natural knowledge, and of an abundance of other learning, which time, however, and accident, had at a later period obliterated. In this light he regarded Moses, and the philosophical poet, who speaks in Job, and the rest in order, according to their circumstances. The discoveries of Linnæus, Waller, Buffon and others, he supposed could now elucidate those ancient writings. This same knowledge, however, he imagined, was extant before, but was obliterated in process of time, and as is often the case in the world of science.

revived again by the ingenuity of modern times. There are other passages of the work, however, which oppose these views, in which he draws his illustration from the manners and customs of the Bedouins, and represents the early condition of mankind as characterised by extreme simplicity. For mind and manners go hand in hand. If the latter remain simple, the former continues the same, and unacquainted with scientific cultivation. These latter passages may serve, therefore, for the correction of the others. Michaelis would certainly not have liberated the human understanding at so early a period, from its swaddling-clothes, provided he had received his earliest education at a time, when opportunities were enjoyed of becoming acquainted with ancient Greece, its manners and customs, its mode of thinking, and its gradual refinement. But he had occasion to lament, even in his old age, the scantiness of this knowledge, both at the school and at the University.* Otherwise, when he made use of the travels, he would have directed his attention more to the progress of mankind, in order to obtain from the descriptions in these travels, a consistent picture of the primitive condition of the human understanding, which would necessarily have thrown a very different light upon the works of the Hebrews. But his early education rendered this impossible. Let not this defect, however, detract for a moment from his reputation and his immense desert. It is a duty we owe to historical justice, to contemplate every great man in his own times.

Many of his exegetical explanations of the Old Testament are obnoxious to the objection before mentioned. But the New Testament approached nearer to our own times, and has been well elucidated by contemporaries. Like an experienced master of his art, Michaelis knew how to avail himself of the raw materials furnished by Lightfoot, Schoettgen, and Wetstein, so as to present an admirable picture of the intellectual character of those times; he knew how to distribute, in a becoming manner, the light and the shade, and to mingle, in such a manner, the earlier and the later colouring, that it eventually be-

* Beyer's Magazine for Preachers, B. II. Art. 6. pp. 2, 6, 7.

came what was necessary for the illustration of the New Testament. We may, perhaps, desire something different in particular passages ; the work, however, as a whole, will still continue to sustain his reputation.

In the midst of this store of exegetical and historical learning, nothing but a knowledge of philosophy was wanting, to perfect in Michaelis the great theologian. He was not, however, entirely deficient in this department. With the philosophy of Leibnitz and Wolf, he had formed a more accurate and profound acquaintance, than many of its most distinguished advocates. It became his guide in the labyrinths of theology, a far better and safer guide than the philosophising didactic theologians of this school, entirely destitute of the aid of philological learning, and whose names now repose in quiet with their ashes.* Michaelis, however, with his peculiar exegetical acuteness, sought only to ascertain, in every case, what the Bible really taught. He examined rigidly the *dicta classica*, which, under his hand, vanished, with the exception of a few, much to the fright of the didactic theologians. He then weighed carefully, upon rational principles, what remained after this refining process of his exegesis, and assisted, to the utmost of his abilities, to do away the old complaints, that the Bible and reason could not dwell together in perfect harmony. His theological style and manner was rather popular than scholastic ; from which circumstance may be explained why, in the discussion of every doctrine, he did not connect exegesis and philosophy with history, for the purpose of eliciting from the spirit of the times, the origin and various forms of the doctrine in all its bearings ; and of placing its present form in the best possible light—the only means, if I am not mistaken, of rendering the young theologian skilful in every part of this science, and of rendering it, without any reference to a future office, an interesting study for the philosophical mind. It was not the design, however, of Michaelis, in adopting this popular manner, to underrate the other,

* His application of the philosophy of Wolf may be seen to the best advantage in his *Thoughts on the Doctrines of Sin and Atonement*.

which is altogether indispensable for genuine theological learning, although it be encumbered with the technical phraseology of the schools. He who was so substantially a promoter of solid learning, could never have designed to obstruct the avenue to the noble doctrinal works of the earlier period of the Reformation; which, happily for the reputation of a goodly number of modern theologians, are now no longer in general circulation.

He taught, generally speaking, the pure doctrines of the church; regarding, however, more the spirit of its symbolical books, than the exact letter; and he defended these doctrines, with a fund of theological learning, and in a manner, in which a few only, during the most eminent period of his life, were able to defend them.

His doctrinal views influenced powerfully the period in which he lived, and prepared the way for the present improvements in theology. This was owing, however, more to his exegetical writings, than to his material of doctrinal theology. This last produced in Germany no general sensation; undoubtedly because it could not boast for its author, a man in a black coat; who had been dubbed a doctor of theology. In Sweden, much to the edification of the German zealots, a formal ~~acto~~ ^{actu} was celebrated in consequence of it. Notwithstanding this, Michaelis triumphed also here with uncommon good fortune. Count Höpken, at that time Chancellor of the university at Upsala, who was led by the proceedings against the book to give it a perusal, expressed, in behalf of his nation, his chagrin at its treatment, and persuaded his king, eighteen years after this act of injustice, to make amends to the author for it, by conferring upon him the order of the Star.

Michaelis was not satisfied with the form which the didactic theology of Germany had assumed during the last twenty years. He was not pleased with the fashion, beginning to prevail, of throwing together what was ancient and what was modern, without any compacted system, although they were so widely different in nature and spirit; of giving with one hand, what was taken away again with the other; of destroying on one page, what had been es-

tablished on the preceding. And what man, of any intellectual strength and character, could regard with complacency this superficial and sophistical manner? Certain it is, this method is not the prevailing one in Germany; nor, from its very nature, can it ever come into general use, for any length of time. Still, there is reason to believe, that Michaelis regarded the condition of didactic theology as much worse than it really was. This was owing, perhaps, to the fact, that old age generally renders the mind more timid and scrupulous; or to the fact, that he could no longer embrace, within the compass of his reading, every thing which the modern investigations in theology had brought to light and established. Michaelis was, accordingly, in his later days, as much revered as the patriarch and support of the old faith, as he had been reviled and abused, in his younger days, as the leader of the reformers of theology. He could hardly have practised a deception in this case. This was not in his nature; his step also was too firm, and his tone much too decided, to permit us to indulge the suspicion. It was perhaps a pause in the progress of his intellectual illumination, fully consistent with the law of our intellectual nature. It fares, in this respect, with an individual as with mankind collectively. As there is a fixed point in the period of the existence of mankind collectively, with regard to their illumination, beyond which they cannot proceed, and in any attempt to advance beyond which they must pay dear for their temerity; so it is also with every individual man. He may indeed become more learned, but not more enlightened. Whereabouts, in every individual case, these limits commence, is frequently determined by accident, mode of life, place of residence, intercourse of earlier and later years, peculiar organization, and an innumerable aggregate of trivial circumstances. Michaelis, by the aid of his extraordinary talents, reached rapidly, and early his highest point. Here his limit was set. It seems indeed to evince uncommon strength and skill in a mind, to be able to assume every form at every age of life; but we should often be deceived, if we attempted to test, by this standard, the powers of contem-

porary scholars. He who has marked out for himself an extensive sphere, can no longer, after a certain age, be present with his mind, in every part; while his neighbour finds himself easily at home in every part of his contracted circle. But which one deserves the greater admiration? How often is it the case that a scholar remains far in advance of his contemporaries, merely because he has had the good luck, and the science in which he labours the ill luck, to have been kept aloof, for a long time, from all men of talents; and that frequently, during whole generations, a curse seems to rest upon science. Praise and censure on the point are to be dispensed with much care. Let it suffice, that Michaelis continued at the head of his contemporaries, in many other departments, until his death. Could this be expected of him in all?

In the midst of all the dislike which he manifested toward a great portion of the latest improvements in didactic theology, he continued always tolerant. For myself at least, I do not recollect, at present, in his writings, any violence of expression, any malicious side-long glances at the later theologians; but merely open-hearted disapprobation of their doctrinal system, couched in serious language, such as is wont to accompany a man of intellectual firmness. Decidedly devoted, as he believed, to the system of doctrines of the symbolical books of his church, it was nevertheless entirely contrary to his views, to repress or forbid discussions concerning their contents. He expressed himself, in the last years of his life, on this subject, by word of mouth, before many witnesses, in a most decided and emphatic manner.

With his system of morals, my acquaintance, drawn from detached expressions of his translation of the Bible, is much too slight to enable me to characterize it fully. According to these expressions, it was deeply tinged with a rigid scrupulousness—undoubtedly a remnant of the over-strained piety of the school in which he was educated. He has left a work on this subject fully completed, which, according to his last will, is to appear in print before every other.

Michaelis thus embraced, in his capacious mind, many

departments, in a manner always peculiar and always eminent. In every one he communicated the tone for a long time, and in many, until his death. For this great superiority, he was indebted to the unceasing study of the sources of his sciences. He took no one at his word. He considered no investigations as closed, and regarded no magisterial assertions. Sometimes, indeed, this new labour was superfluous; but it was never entirely useless. The investigation received, at least, through him, a new direction; it became new to whatever point it was directed; and conducted to other subordinate points hitherto untouched. And if he sometimes neglected, (as was perhaps the fact,) to compare the labours of others, until his own investigations were brought to a close, still, no gap is left in his investigation, and no complaints can justly be indulged, of a proud disregard of earlier merit. He certainly availed himself willingly, in his researches, of the assistance and counsel of his friends at hand and at a distance. Every one also received credit for his own contribution, however trivial, as if it were a most important public concern; for every one found it again, with the mention of his name, in the writings of Michaelis.

Considering the striking peculiarity of his whole mind, the many new results with which his writings abounded, and his frequent opposition to prevailing notions, he could, in the ordinary course of events, scarcely count upon universal approbation. But what great man has not met with more opposition than applause from his contemporaries? A great and bold undertaking is not suited to the ordinary dimensions of human talents, and from this circumstance meets with opposition; but it does not follow from this that it should not meet with a merited reception from talents of the right grade.

He was less solicitous about the exterior decorations, than about the internal value of his works. His Latin style, during those years in which he was wont to polish with care, bore evident marks of a good knowledge of classical Latinity; and even in his later years, when old age enjoined a greater degree of haste, it still betrayed the good soil from which it sprang. With the improve-

ment of our vernacular language, which took place during his years of manhood, his own German style was also improved; and there was a period of his life, in which he was ambitious of the honour of being numbered amongst the wits of Germany; after a while the serious sciences pleased him better, and thenceforth he aimed in his writings more at the excellencies of a conversational manner, than at elaborate ornament and conciseness. On this account, he was wont to entangle his discourse with participial connections, and to interlard it with French words, even where they contributed, in clearness or strength, nothing more than the equivalent German expressions.

As an author, he resembled a prudent and devoted father, who is attentive to the wants of his offspring, and rigidly endeavours to supply them wherever they are observed. He made, continually, alterations and improvements in his works, and substituted new translations for old ones. Those who were not aware, from their own experience, of the labyrinth through which the human understanding must wind its cheerless way, were ready to complain, in his frequent and various retractions, of a neglect of earlier examination, and of the consequences of a censurable haste; an injustice which ingenious and inquisitive scholars must too often put up with from their meeker contemporaries, who have no resources beyond the meagre inheritance received from their instructors. Pertinacity of opinion in a scholar is generally the consequence of his stationariness in the sciences, which is already half a relapse.

All these distinguished excellencies of Michaelis are known to the German public at large; his pupils alone are acquainted with others, equally rare, which placed him in the number of the most eminent university teachers. With the exception, perhaps, of a slight excess of wit, he was free from most of the faults which attach themselves to that station. He always came forward after a full and previous preparation of the matter, and left merely the words to be supplied on the occasion. Filled with his subject, he spoke with order, clearness, life, fire, sometimes with inspiration, always with that interest, him-

self, in the subject, which awakens an interest in others even for the dryest communication. His preparation was always undertaken the day before. This afforded him time and opportunity for new investigations, much to the gain of his audience and the public; his style, however, lost that conciseness, which he would have given it, had he come forward immediately after his preparation. As it was, he was under the necessity of combining the thoughts of the preceding day with those last conceived, which were not very closely connected with the former; this frequently led, indeed, to new windings and combinations, but the thread was necessarily lengthened. Not unfrequently he engaged before his audience in full investigations, whose results merely he might have presented; by which means, the nobler minds learnt, from an experienced master, the art of research. The others, whose aims were lower, were satisfied with the naked result. All his studies and investigations had a bearing upon his business as an instructor, and hence his course of instruction was eminently learned, and became afterwards the proper source of his writings. His communications were never designed for mere amusement, and on this account were the better adapted to form a future taste for individual cultivation of the sciences. All Germany is aware how great a number of learned men, in his and the kindred departments, proceeded from his school. His whole soul was alive to the interests of his best scholars, as long as they were under his immediate direction; he assisted them with advice and encouragement, to the extent of his power and opportunities. As soon as they displayed abilities and disposition for a speculative life, he assisted them diligently in obtaining those places, where they might rapidly unfold themselves; and to this end he regarded a distant place the best adapted, where they might turn to advantage the instruction received from him, better than when nearer to him. As soon as he saw them established, he left them to themselves, to establish their own fame, and gave his sole attention to his younger scholars, who were still beneath his eye. He designed that they should be indebted to themselves and their abi-

lities, for the final establishment of their prosperity and reputation.

All this was accomplished by a single individual, for his scholars, for his contemporaries, and for posterity, by means of his high endowments and unwearied industry. He first aroused his own talents, and then awakened, developed and ennobled the endowments of others. He was the father and nurse, the fosterer and the patron of science, in a state of tender orphanage. Poor and needy, after receiving all the treasures which came to him by inheritance; and immensely rich in the fruits of his own labour, which descended, at his death, as an imperishable legacy, to posterity.

Such thou wast, revered instructor, and such, by thine own exertions, thou didst become; in the midst of all the obstacles of education, which thou didst successfully surmount; and all the difficulties of thy situation, which thou didst overcome; and all the follies of thy contemporaries, which thou didst bear with patience. Such were thy labours, although reviled from the commencement by thy ignorant contemporaries, and frequently persecuted and attacked by malicious envy and bitter malice; unappreciated in thy life-time by many of thy contemporaries, and now in death—unrequited. Unconcerned about the arts of thine enemies, the designs of thine enviers, and the malice of the ignorant; known and respected by kings, prized by their ministers, and admired by Europe; thou didst pursue thine untrodden way, for the enlargement of the kingdom of truth and of science, and didst bear, with thine own name, the name of *Georgia Augusta* far beyond the limits of Germany, into every civilized land of Europe.

And now thou reposest, with all thine admirable endowments, where the ashes of common men repose. But thou shalt not be forgotten. Thine image remains deeply imprinted on the heart of *Georgia Augusta*, and time will carry thy name down through the endless lapse of succeeding generations.

THE
HISTORY
OF
THEOLOGICAL KNOWLEDGE
AND LITERATURE,

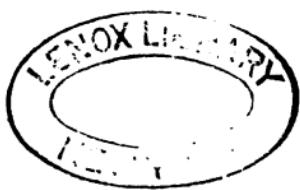
FROM THE BEGINNING OF THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY
TO 1810.

BY CARL. FRED. STAEUDLIN,
PROFESSOR OF THEOLOGY AT GÖTTINGEN.

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THOMAS CLARK, 38, GEORGE STREET.

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PREFATORY NOTICE.

STAEUDLIN'S History is designed to exhibit the state and progress of theological knowledge, from the revival of literature to the present time.* Its author, the Professor of theology at *Goettingen*, has divided the work into three periods—from the year 1450 to the Reformation; from the Reformation to the commencement of the 18th century; from the beginning of the 18th century to the present time. This history is given under different heads—as, Theological knowledge generally; Hermeneutics; Systematic theology; Church history, &c. &c.

The portion here translated, is from the first head, of the third period, in which the writer, before entering upon the details of his history, presents us with an exhibition of the causes which led to the great revolution in theolo-

* The Preface of the first Volume is dated May 1810.

gical opinion, which occurred during the 18th century. To this succeeds an account of the most important works of this period, intended to prescribe the manner and course of theological education, &c. There are few subjects on which information is more generally desired, than the state of theological opinion and learning on the continent, during the last fifty or hundred years. The reader will find the greater part of this interesting account in the following article.

THE
HISTORY
OF
THEOLOGICAL KNOWLEDGE
AND LITERATURE.

DURING this period a great revolution in all departments of theological learning was gradually effected. Like all other revolutions, it was long preparing, and its seeds were scattered during the previous period, although that period exhibited so remarkable a contrast with the present. This change owed its origin to various causes, and is capable of being viewed in a variety of aspects. Its principal cause was the deism which arose in the 17th century in England ; and its principal aspect, is that of a species of deism, which gradually pervaded all departments of theology. It is easy to find many other causes and aspects, of this great literary revolution. Some may even produce many appearances, seemingly inconsistent with the representation just given ; they may appeal to the fact, that deism was zealously and powerfully opposed, and that many theologians set themselves with all their strength against the design of making it prevalent, and of reducing Christianity to its level ; and yet it may have been the main tendency and principal effect of the literary labours of these theologians to render the deism they opposed still more prevalent.

Most of the English deists attacked only the divine origin, credibility, and the authenticity of the Sacred Scriptures ; the contents of the Sacred Volume were but in part assailed, as the accounts of miracles and the system of ecclesiastical theology ; but the character and the doctrines of Jesus himself were spared. The latter they generally represented as a pure and popular system of deism, suited to the people of the age. Most theologians opposed themselves to these writers, endeavouring to save what the deists had rejected as unnecessary and unfounded, and to uphold Revelation and not Reason, as the standard of religion. Yet many theologians soon appeared in England, who in many points nearly agreed with the deists. It is true, they did not abandon the authority, genuineness and credibility of the Sacred Volume, and the preceptive and historical parts of Christianity ; but they purged the ecclesiastical system from every thing which appeared to them inconsistent with reason, and produced systems of Christian theology which were pervaded by this liberal spirit. The constantly increasing power and fame of the British nation, in the eighteenth century, spread its literature over all Europe. The writings of its deists and its theologians, who were termed latitudinarians, were read especially in Germany with zeal and attention, and have, in connection with other causes, produced that great revolution in theology and religious opinion, which has proved more thorough and general in this country, and has proceeded further than in Britain itself, and which has hence spread its effects into other lands. This great change first appeared in the German protestant churches, whence it was extended to the German catholics.

The reign of Frederick II. had great influence upon the state of theology and religion, and the greater on account of the splendour of his exploits ; for the more he was admired as a king, hero and sage, the more were other monarchs disposed to imitate him. He gave the press, in his dominions, unrestrained freedom, and was rejoiced when he saw Christianity, (which he had hated from his youth) attacked. He entertained a decided

contempt for Christianity, theology, the church and the clergy. He surrounded himself with French philosophers, who were acknowledged as the enemies of all positive religion, as sceptics, materialists, and atheists; he scarcely preserved himself from their extremes, though he would sometimes support simple deism in opposition to his courtiers. Since this period the freedom of the press has been extended to other states of Europe; and most of the enlightened theologians (so called) in and out of his states, declared themselves more or less openly in favour of deism, and exerted themselves, in various ways, to represent Christianity as nothing more than a system of natural religion. They regarded this as the only way in which it could be saved or preserved in honour.

The propagation of deism, and its introduction into theology, had still other causes. The various departments of natural philosophy were more cultivated and enriched; they were held in higher esteem, and applied more practically to the affairs of life. Miracles were referred to the laws and the powers of nature, and where these could not be discovered, they were still supposed to exist. Hence the desire arose, not to allow any miracles in the strict sense of the term, (no supernatural events,) even in religion; a desire either to explain the miracles of the Bible as natural occurrences, or reject them as fabulous narrations, and to give currency to a merely natural religion, and to represent Christianity as entirely independent of any thing supernatural.

The constantly extending and more accurate knowledge of the history of religions, had also a great influence in producing this change. The history and nature of ancient religions, mythology, and religious rites, were investigated with more critical skill, with more philological and historical learning, and with more of a philosophical spirit. The many journeys, missions, voyages and wars, in distant parts of the world, brought men acquainted with the state of religion, and brought many new systems to light. Men compared these religions with each other, and with Judaism and Christianity. They found in other religions many representations, many ideas, facts,

and customs, analogous to those in the Jewish and Christian systems, without being able to prove, nor even having ground to suppose, that they had been introduced from the latter into the former. They were hence led to suppose, that what had in other religions no immediately divine origin, could boast of no such origin in Christianity ; and that what was found in so many other systems, could give no distinctive character to the Christian. And to these points of resemblance belonged some of those very doctrines which had been regarded as the holiest and most characteristic in the Christian system. They were thus led to regard as of less importance the peculiarities of Christianity, and to endeavour to raise it to a pure system of natural religion ; and whatever from this source was contained in Christianity, and had not found its way into other religions, they considered as its most important part, and in fact as the essence of the religion.

The influence of philosophy upon theology, deserve also particular attention. In the beginning of the 18th century, the philosophy of Locke had spread extensively both within and without Great Britain, and had gained complete ascendency. It denied entirely all inborn knowledge and innate ideas ; it taught that all our knowledge, without exception, was derived from sensation or reflection, and consequently that all our ideas were images of objects presented to us by our internal or external senses. It was in this way that Locke deduced our ideas of God and morality, and gave himself much trouble to shew that they were in no way born with us, nor unfolded themselves from the mind itself. This philosophy was more favourable to *Rationalism* than to the opposite system. It represented all knowledge, faith and volition, as arising from sensible things. It thus led to scepticism, by its dependance on the uncertainty, versatility and inconstancy of experience. Although its author adhered to the Christian faith, and was correct in his morals, yet his philosophy promoted infidelity and looseness of principle, both in religion and morality. Setting all this aside, it was not easy to find from Locke's system a pa-

sage to Christianity as a supernatural revelation, and containing mysteries above reason and nature. This system, founded so entirely upon sensation and experience, excluded from Christianity every thing which may be termed *spiritual*, as founded upon the mind itself, and which was the ground work of *supernatural* theories. Locke also, in another of his works, represented Christianity as so rational and simple, that we may without any impropriety assert that it had a manifest tendency to deism. His philosophy found many friends and defenders, especially in France, who applied the principles deducible from it to the injury of all positive religion, and even to the support of materialism and atheism. Bayle, a cotemporary of Locke, is not to be considered as belonging to this class ; his literary character is that of a sceptic, who attacked and weakened all systems of philosophy and theology, and was constantly opposing the one to the other. France had produced little fruit of pure deism ; it had either kept philosophy entirely distinct from religion and theology, or it had used it to undermine them both ; but it influenced in this way many philosophers in England and Germany, to defend, purify, and more firmly to establish the deistical system.

Wilh. Leibnitz appeared in opposition to the philosophy of Locke, and the sceptical doubts and raillery of Bayle. He admitted, properly speaking, no impression from external objects, not even of our own bodies upon the mind, but supposed that all perceptions and ideas arose from the inward principle of the soul itself. He shewed especially, that universal and essential first principles did not arise from experience, but were an *a priori* knowledge. The idea and the existence of God he deduced *a priori*. His whole system was a firmer foundation for religion than that of Locke. In opposition to Bayle, he endeavoured to exhibit the consistency between the evil which is in the world and divine providence, between faith and reason. In this latter investigation he effected a union between his philosophy and Christian theology, and placed weapons in the hands of theologians against *Rationalism*. He started with the

principle, that the two classes of truths, those revealed by God, and those taught by reason, could not contradict each other. He, moreover, divided the truths taught by reason into two classes, those which were necessarily true, and whose opposites were absolutely impossible; and those which are only hypothetically true or necessary, or whose necessity depends merely upon the order of nature which God has chosen, and which he may at any time alter. With respect to the first class, he maintained that no truth really revealed can contradict them; but with regard to the others, that they might be repealed, and were actually repealed by miracles, which removed the condition upon which they were truths. In this view, he admitted an opposition between philosophical and revealed truth. It was not an opposition of reason considered absolutely, and revelation; but an opposition between what was only conditionally true, and a revelation which removed the condition. Faith was here not opposed to reason, but was itself most reasonable; it was a faith in the exceptions and changes which God himself had made in the course of nature, and therefore a faith perfectly consistent with reason. Leibnitz thus taught that there was, properly speaking, no real opposition between reason and faith, between philosophy and revelation. He further maintained that it was true philosophy, and truly reasonable, to believe what God had revealed, even when it stood opposed to our limited understandings and imperfect knowledge. The divinely revealed mysteries of the gospel, he regarded as truths which the human mind could not of itself discover, nor establish, and consequently could not comprehend; but yet could explain and defend, since they did not contradict reason, but were perfectly consistent with it. This he undertook to prove as it regarded the several Christian mysteries. Thus he opposed *Naturalism*, and his principles were soon embraced by many theologians to defend their theological systems, and to set them off in a philosophical attire. These principles received a more systematic finish, and a wider circulation, through Chr. Wolf. He wrote a system of natural theology, in which he expressly opposed

the errors of deism and naturalism, and presented a systematic theory of a supernatural revelation; wherein he endeavoured to exhibit and prove the possibility of such a revelation, its contents and criteria, and the condition upon which it could be intelligently believed. A party of Leibnitizian-Wolfian philosophers soon arose, principally in Germany, and among protestants, but not confined to them, as the influence of this philosophy was visible in other countries, and among the catholics, in the aspect and treatment of theological subjects. As Wolf himself became a martyr to his philosophy, and as the theologians of Halle, who were followers of Spener, and their numerous party, opposed themselves to the followers of Wolf, the zeal of the latter, as might be expected, was the more excited and carried to an extreme. They not only maintained the utility of their philosophy in theology, but they produced a complete system both of doctrines and of morals founded upon its principles. Its influence was even felt in pastoral theology, in sermons and catechetical exercises. Notwithstanding this philosophy had embraced the cause of revelation, it promoted in many a disposition for the opposite system. Wolf had laid more stress upon reason, in the things of religion, than was favourable for its subsequent and durable defence; and he incurred the suspicion of being only in appearance its advocate, while some of the principles of his philosophy were in direct opposition to some of the essential principles of Christianity. He had not been able to prove, that in any case we can with perfect certainty satisfy ourselves of the supernatural origin of a revelation. Subsequently some of his best disciples and followers became open deists. It was through the influence of his philosophy that more systematic connection, precision, perspicuity, and a more philosophical use of words, especially in German, were introduced into theology, and the Aristotelian scholastic philosophy discarded.

The most distinguished opposer of this system, was Crussius, who opposed to it a system of philosophy, the perfect harmony of which with the orthodox Lutheran theology and Biblical morality, he endeavoured to exhibit.

bit. This system is unquestionably the production of a philosophical mind, but appears in itself little suited to answer the purpose of an orthodox faith; it was adopted by numerous and zealous advocates, especially among theologians; but as it maintained its standing only for a short time, as it produced no effect beyond the limits of Germany, and as the Wolfian philosophy still preserved the ascendancy, it does not require any further notice.

In France, in the meantime, philosophy continued decidedly inimical, not only to all systematic theology, but to Christianity and religion in general. In Great Britain, sceptics appeared, who, whilst elegant and distinguished writers, shook the foundation of religion, morals and Christianity. In Germany, respect for the Leibnitzian-Wolfian philosophy gradually declined. It was found little suited to purposes of improvement, and not sufficient to answer new objections; fault was found with its method, its proof and repetitions; it was thus either neglected or rejected; men questioned its solidity, and found it more convenient, and more fashionable, to embrace the popular philosophy of the famous French and English writers. From these writers, from experience and observation, from histories and travels, a new philosophical system was formed; and various works, some profound and some elementary, were composed. Men became more and more averse to research. This period of philosophy in Germany was by no means favourable to theology. It lost its principles, its leading points, its aims, and its commanding interest. It became a mixture of empirical, weak and unfledged opinions and doctrines. It lost the spirit of investigation, of pure religion and morality.

Kant at length produced a revolution in philosophy, which is the most remarkable of the eighteenth century, and which extended its influence beyond Germany, and still continues its effects. He was excited to this effort by the scepticism of Hume, against whom he wished to defend the certainty of human knowledge, and especially religion and morality. It was at the same time his professed object to refute materialism, spinozism, atheism,

and even naturalism, so far as this last would derive theology merely from nature, and endeavoured to prove the absolute impossibility of a revelation. For all these purposes he found the previous systems inadequate. He therefore created a new philosophy, in which he commenced with an accurate and rigid examination and estimate of the powers of the human mind, thence to determine what man could know, and what he had to do, believe and hope. He presented a system not derived from experience, but from the mind itself. The ideas of religion and morality he evolved from unassisted reason, which he represented as the original principle in religion and the supreme judge in matters of faith. For the existence of God he admitted no decided proof, but a strong moral ground of faith. He taught simple moral deism. He did not speak contemptuously of positive religion, but taught that it was to be judged critically and philosophically, and also that the positive and historical doctrines of Christianity could be viewed as the sensible and figurative covering of simple and universal religious and moral doctrines. This philosophy had great influence upon every department of theological knowledge, and introduced more of speculation, depth, research, life and interest into studies of this nature. By it the tendency of the eighteenth century to deism was made perfectly manifest.

From this species of deism, various others arose, which agreed in nothing, but in entirely rejecting miracles, properly so called, as the foundation or any essential part of religion. During this century almost every system of philosophical religion or natural theology which had formerly prevailed among the Greeks and Romans, was waked up and found its advocates, who have disputed with as much warmth as the most zealous theologians could have done. All these systems were of course set in opposition to any supernatural revelation. Every attempt, however, to make *rational* or natural religion the public and acknowledged form of religion, failed. The Bible was retained as the public standard of religion and morals, the historical foundation of the church, and the ancient

symbols were not rejected; but men endeavoured to derive as much of simple deism from the Bible as possible, and introduced it as far as they could into positive religion and church creeds. The later philosophical systems which have arisen in Germany, ascribe much more philosophical truth to Christianity, and even to church theology, than the previous systems had done, although in their definitions and explanations they differ much from each other: Kant explained the philosophical sense of Christianity differently from Schelling; both, however, wished to honour Christianity as the public religion, and to unite it with reason, with which, from its origin, it was congenial.

The French nation had great influence in a variety of ways upon European literature, and upon theology, during the eighteenth century. This has already been alluded to, but it deserves to be presented in a different light. Among the Hugonots, whom Lewis XIV. expelled from France, and who settled in Holland, Germany, England, and other parts of Europe, were many learned men, who carried with them the refinement to which the French language and literature had then attained; and imparted much from this source to the literature of the several countries in which they settled. Among these were many learned theologians, who wrote upon the subjects of religion, with more taste, with greater knowledge of men, with more ease, grace and eloquence than were then usual, and which were united in most cases with erudition and research. These men laboured and were imitated in foreign lands. Bayle, Saurin, Beausobre, Lenfant, and others, are illustrious names in the history of theological literature. From France the custom spread itself still further, of writing upon learned subjects in vernacular tongues. This, especially in theological knowledge, produced a great revolution. With the old Latin terminology, which the public generally could not understand, and which scarcely admitted of translation, many old doctrines and opinions passed away. In living languages much could be expressed, for which no proper term was to be found in those that are dead. By thus writing in vernacular tongues, religious and theological doctrines

came before the public generally, which they could not only learn, but upon which they also could sit in judgment, and thus they could to a certain degree control the learned theological order. Theology became more popular and practical, though less profound.

During the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, a polemical spirit prevailed all departments of theology. As the different Christian parties persecuted and combated each other, thus also the learned theologians acted in presenting and promoting their opinions. But as by degrees toleration, justice, equity and forbearance towards those who held a different faith, and professed a different system of Christianity, made greater progress, so a more peaceful spirit extended itself in all theological matters. Polemics themselves fell into disuse, and what still remained of them was very different from what they had previously been; they were a mere critique and comparison of different systems. Men sought, in their theological opinions and principles, to understand and coincide with each other; whilst before almost every discussion of the kind was undertaken with the view to destroy the opposite party, to cover it with obloquy, and widen the existing breach. The zealous controversy became more and more assimilated to the mild discussion; and even this refrained from less important subjects, and concerned itself more with things than with persons. Men attended to theology more for their own improvement, than for the injury of their adversaries. Deism, which had gradually pervaded all branches of theology, was a kind of centre-point for the different parties. It promoted toleration; because it was itself benefited by its prevalence.

But with the increasing spirit of toleration, a coldness and indifference towards religion, Christianity, church order, and unity, gradually extended itself; resulting from causes which it is not my present business to unfold. This disposition has by degrees mingled itself with theology. Upon the whole, the earnestness, the attention, the zeal, the diligence, the strong religious interest with which, formerly, this species of knowledge was cultivated, have declined. In both the previous centuries, the sources

and treasures of theology were investigated with the greatest labour, and innumerable and generally very voluminous works were written ; during the eighteenth, these materials, thus prepared, were used and applied to more general purposes, and employed with more judgment ; although really erudite theology became gradually less rich. The different subjects of theology were indeed more separated, and in general they were reduced to more regularity of form ; they were treated with more philosophy and taste ; they were presented in union with more learning, and enriched with the literary treasures of the foregoing centuries. The directions for theological study, works prescribing the course the student should pursue, and theological cyclopedias, became more numerous and important. Works of greater or less dimensions were composed, in which were given a systematic view of theological literature, an account of the contents of important books, and notices of the lives of ecclesiastical writers. Periodical works on theology in every department, Journals, Bibliotheca, Reviews, &c. commenced with the eighteenth century, and are still continued.

AN ACCOUNT OF INTRODUCTIONS TO THE STUDY OF THEOLOGY, OF THEOLOGICAL CYCLOPEDIAS, &c.

In the evangelical church, great changes have occurred during this period. The old Lutheran system, the centre of all theological knowledge and effort, lost by degrees its friends and defenders ; as this was the result, in part, of the more extensive cultivation of other branches of theology, so it operated on the manner in which these branches were treated. The spirit of reform was constantly active in every department of theology, and gave rise to opinions in striking contrast with the symbolical books which men either would not or could not remove. All this happened first and principally in Germany, which was the most important evangelical country, as it regards theological science. Here, where the new evangelical system

arose, it was first undermined. Here have diligence, effort, research and erudition been devoted to this branch of knowledge, and more numerous aids been secured in its cultivation than in any other country. Here have appeared numerous works for prescribing the course of study, cyclopedias, and works which not only prescribe the course to be pursued, but the books the student ought to read.

Immediately after the commencement of this period, the important influence of the school of Spener upon the spirit and method of theological pursuits began to manifest itself. According to the principles of this school, more was to be expected in the formation of a genuine theologian, from true piety of heart and life than from learning; that true theology was not merely a matter of speculative knowledge, but an inward light derived from God, through spiritual experience; that only those who have been regenerated could attain to this genuine theology; that this new birth itself depended upon faith in the divinely revealed doctrines of the Holy Scriptures; that although learning was not to be entirely neglected by the theologian, it possessed for him only a limited and subordinate importance; and that it should in him always receive a practical tendency; that between the formation of a learned theologian and a church pastor a difference should be made; and that the course of public instruction should be accommodated to the latter class, as the most numerous; that to the former a moderate and discrete study of philosophy should be permitted, and a deeper knowledge of theology should be made necessary; yet the purely Biblical doctrines, as to faith and morals, were to be received and presented. They admitted a difference between theology and religion, but maintained that the former should be thoroughly pervaded by the latter. The most important means to be used in the education of a genuine theologian and teacher, should be practical, familiar and instructive lectures, joined with suitable instructions, exhortations, and warnings.

Upon these principles, the books prescribing the course of theological study and discipline were constructed. To

this class belong the following works of Franke: *The method of theological studies, with the method of Biblical discipline, and the idea of a theological student.* These works are replete with excellent counsels and directions, and are written with uncommon power. They are adapted not merely to direct the theological student, but also to excite the liveliest interest for his pursuits, and arouse him to the strictest cultivation of piety. In the first of these books, Franke discourses not only on the nature and object, but also upon the helps, order, and difficulties of theological studies. *Prayer, meditation, and self-examination* are represented as the most important aids, in the prosecution of this interesting study.

Joach. Lange considered more fully the several branches of theology, and the departments of literature, whose connection with it was most intimate, yet without neglecting general principles. He lamented the error and the want of order, in the course generally pursued; which he supposed arose principally from having either a false object in view, or from having no definite object whatever. The true object he represented to be, to restore the divine image in ourselves and others, and thus to promote the divine glory. In attaining this object, according to his opinion, consisted true erudition, compared with which all other learning is of little account; indeed that there can be no real learning, on this subject, without a principle of divine grace, regeneration and sanctification, and that theology deserves the appellation of *sacred*, not merely from its object, but also from the manner in which it ought to be treated and studied. He taught expressly that in these studies more depended upon the *will* than upon the *understanding*; and consequently that if any one did not prosecute them with prayer and spiritual exercises, his labour would be in vain. He wished that those branches which depended merely upon memory, as languages, should be attended to before those which require judgment, as philosophy and mathematics; but he opposed the opinions of those who would require the student to spend the first year or two of his academical course entirely in preparatory stu-

dies, and only after this term apply himself to theology. He rather desired that he should make theology, from the first, his principal object, and unite with it now one, new another branch. He consoled those who at the universities, through want of time, opportunity, or resources, could not attend to other branches of learning, but were obliged to confine themselves to theology, with the consideration, that these branches were frequently a hindrance rather than an advantage ; and that with a moderate knowledge of languages, and a judgment enlightened and sanctified by divine grace, they could deduce all parts of theology from the Sacred Scriptures. He therefore gives a number of rules to the theological student for the direction of his academical life and studies, in the general, and then respecting the method of studying particular branches, as exegesis and philology, didactic theology and morals, casuistry, polemics, sermonizing, and church history. Exegetical studies he called the foundation, the nerves, and the centre of all theology. He admitted the use of commentaries only after they had themselves exerted all their strength to discover the sense of the Sacred Writings. He discriminated between the external and the internal means of interpreting the Sacred Scriptures ; to the former he referred, sacred philology and archeology, exegetical lectures and writings ; to the latter the enlightening grace of God, a real taste and experience of divine things, and a sound, natural, yet sanctified understanding. In morals he warned them of the dangers of pelagianism and indifferentism. To polemics he devoted more attention, and ascribed to them greater importance than we should have expected from a follower of Spener. He showed how controversies with the Catholics, the Reformed, the Socinians, the Jews, Sceptics and Atheists should be conducted. As to sermonizing, he thought that the directions could be contained in a very few rules. Ecclesiastical history he regarded as essentially important, and directed that it should be studied from the original fountains. Besides these directions, his book contained a compendious view of the literature of the various departments of theology.

The opposers of the followers of Spener controverted their principle respecting the theology of those who were regenerated, they regarded much as an essential part of Christianity which the former considered as scholasticism; they held firmly to the literal doctrines of Luther, accused the pietists of hypocrisy and heresy, and represented their opposition to learning as arising from the fact that they could make no pretensions to it themselves. The last accusation was refuted by the character of the authors and disciples of this school, and especially by the writings of J. F. Buddeus, his *Historical and Theological Introduction to Theology and its several branches*. In this work the principles of Spener are plainly manifested, although it is a production of the most profound and extensive erudition; and it shows how many branches of learning are connected with theology, and to a greater or less degree important to the theologian. The introductory sections on the *object of theological studies*, on the *talents and mental qualifications of the theological student*, and upon *the means of attaining the end proposed*, clearly evince the discipline of Spener. The investigation which follows, concerning *preparatory theological studies*, exhibits a man who had cultivated the literature of his own age, who was familiar with every branch of knowledge, and who knew how to exhibit the advantage which theology could derive from each, and yet who was careful not to apply any branch to the detriment of his subject. The ancient languages, philology generally, criticism, grammar, rhetoric, poetry, history in all its branches, the natural sciences, mathematics, and medicine are here all reviewed for this purpose. The several branches of theology to which introductions are given, are thus divided and arranged,—doctrinal, symbolical, patristical, moral, with mystical and pastoral, theology, church government, ecclesiastical history, polemics, and exegesis. In this work the history of these branches occupies the greatest space, which not only in itself, but as facilitating the investigation of these subjects, is exceedingly instructing and interesting. This work greatly excelled all that preceded it, and forms an epoch in writings of this nature; it shows

that some change had already taken place in theology, and contains grounds for anticipating a still more important revolution. If it be too learned and extensive for most beginners, it has a greater value to those who wish to enter more thoroughly into studies of this nature. Besides the richness and variety of its erudition, it is greatly recommended by its spirit of moderation, modesty and piety.

J. G. Walch followed, in his *Introduction to Theological Knowledge*, the principles and writings of Buddeus. This work was properly an epitome from the Prolegomena or preparatory course, for the use of his lectures. With respect to each branch, he treated first of its nature, contents and objects, its importance, sources, and method, and then of the means with which it should be studied; where we always find the reading of certain works, which are here quoted in great numbers, and meditation and prayer recommended. J. C. Roecher had before this published a short introduction to the study of theology, in which he treated not only the preparatory subjects, but also of the several branches of theology itself. Among the latter we find, besides the common divisions, prophetic, typical, paracletical, irenical, comparative, mathematical and foederal theology.

The numerous and diversified changes which occurred during this period, in theological opinions and in the mode of presenting them, had naturally a great influence upon the class of writing we are now considering. New principles were introduced, new questions arose, new demands were to be satisfied; attention was to be paid to new philosophical systems, new objections, new difficulties, and new helps. These books of directions, therefore, differed considerably from each other. The work of Mosheim belonging to this class, was a posthumous production, and would not have been published by him in its present state; yet his spirit is clearly manifested in it; and the simplicity of its plan, its perspicuity, the comprehensive view which it takes of the whole compass of theology, and the characteristic remarks with which it abounds, leave no doubt of its having actually proceeded from him. He

considered the proper object of such a work to be, to exhibit the means whereby a student could obtain a facility and skill in discharging the duties which would devolve upon him as a teacher and pastor. He distinguished it from pastoral theology, which is the knowledge of the official duty of one who is already a preacher; but the work in question is designed to point out the means of preparing for the office, and is principally concerned with what belongs to clerical learning. He considered it impossible to form a work of this kind, which would be alike suitable to all times, and that it was necessary that its peculiar character should be adapted to the age in which its author lived. He found that it was only since the Reformation that such works were composed, or that men began to prescribe so particularly the course of theological education. He very properly introduced a short history of theological seminaries. Luther's aphorism,—*oratio, meditatio, tentatio, faciunt theogrum*,—which has been so often regarded as a direction for the study of theology, and which has as frequently been made the foundation of works intended to prescribe the course to be pursued in these studies, he shewed was only to be understood of those who were already in the sacred office, and that even with respect to them it did not include every thing. He remarked that most authors of works of this nature, recommended particularly the department with which they were themselves most familiar; that they did not make a sufficient distinction between the theologian and the pastor; and that they took for granted the time, ability, and opportunity of the student to attend to all their rules. In his own work he distinguished the preacher from the theologian, although he admitted that there were subjects to which they should attend in common. The studies and exercises which prepared the way for prosecuting theology, he represented as equally serviceable to the pastor and the theologian; desiring the latter, however, to enter into them more thoroughly. He treats at length those departments, which it is requisite for the clergyman, particularly the pastor, to cultivate. It may be worth while to quote some of his directions.

It is, in his opinion, better not to delay attention to didactic theology, but to gain a general view of it before entering very deeply into the study of the Bible ; it would be well to take a short course of theology, that some foundation may be laid, and the connection and aim of theology be preserved. Ecclesiastical history cannot be thoroughly studied, before we are acquainted with theology ; and it would be improper to commence with the study of morals, because constant reference must be had to doctrines whence these moral duties flow ; to begin with deep and extensive study of the Sacred Scriptures, would be a very circuitous way, requiring many years. The study of didactic theology should be connected with the study of the Bible, and in theology, the philosophical and Biblical method should be united ; the system for beginners should be a philosophical catechism, so short as to be easily learned. To his directions for the education of a learned theologian, Mosheim prefixes the title, "*Of the Theologian of our time.*" He distinguishes the theologian from the pastor, principally in this, that the former has no particular congregation, but has to labour for the whole church, and train up proper teachers for it ; should the church of the Lord be disturbed by false doctrines and mischievous abuses, it is his business to stand in the breach and endeavour to repress every thing likely to prove injurious. He is, as it were, an eye over the whole church, which should have the perspicacity easily to discover any thing inimical to true religion : a theologian of our time, worthy of this name, is a very difficult character to sustain ; his influence depends upon no external support, but he must form himself, and have something about him, which will secure the respect, affection, and esteem of men.

Soon after the appearance of this work of Mosheim, Semler presented himself as an author in this department, at first in a work written in German, and afterwards in one written in Latin. In the former, he insisted so strongly upon the necessity of thorough and extensive erudition, that it was objected to him, that he attributed to it too much importance, that he made piety only a se-

secondary concern, and that he wished to set his method in opposition to that of Franke. He was also accused of preferring the scholastic theology to that which was purely Biblical. Semler found it necessary to defend himself against these charges, and especially to show that a thorough theological education promoted the interests of religion, advanced pure piety, and preserved it from errors, superstition, and fanaticism. The second of these books was written while he had the duty to discharge, of lecturing upon the extent, the nature, and the aids of theological learning. It was generally the case with him, when he was about to write, that he did not take a general and systematic view of his subject; formed no plan suited to its nature, collected no sufficient quantity of materials, and wrote in a desultory manner, and under the influence of a few favourite ideas, and thus he has done in the present instance. In this work, there is more that is extraneous than what is pertinent, much which is essential is omitted, and the subject is not exhausted. In the first division of his work, he treated of the *efforts of Christians, in the interpretation of Sacred Scripture, and the formation of a system of doctrines, during the first five centuries.* He remarked that his chief object in this work was to show, that in the first ages there was no uniform and constant system of doctrine, of church discipline and government existing, as has since been the case—that the churches and teachers were very erroneous—that many books were surreptitiously introduced—that the spirit of Christianity is now much better understood than it was then—that in different times, the compass and apparatus of theology has been very different—but that the essential part of Christianity has always been the same, and that it depends much more upon a Christian life than upon a constant uniformity of doctrinal opinions. In the second division, he treats of the *aids for theological learning*; that is, of Greek and Latin philology, of ancient chronology, geography, and antiquities, of history generally, and especially the history of philosophy; of the books of the Old and New Testaments, the necessity of the study of lan-

grasses, of commentaries, and translations, of the difficulties in the way of a proper interpretation of Scripture, and finally, of systematic theology. The work abounds with historical remarks and extracts, relating principally to the labours of Melancthon and Zwingle, the doctrinal writings of the Catholics, the progress of the Reformers, the occasion of the articles of agreement, and the Jesuits. Semler everywhere sought the traces of liberal doctrines, he everywhere urged free and independent views. He opposed the system of church doctrines, but did not wish these formulæ to be removed; he placed them in opposition to inward personal religion, as if the received system could not cherish and promote personal religion; such is his *Introduction to a liberal Theological Education*. The excuse which he offers that nothing is said on Ecclesiastical History, and respecting the Fathers, is that his work was written as a foundation for his own lectures; as though this subject ought not to be treated in a different manner, and with a different object. As it regards Hermeneutics, he admitted that he was not sufficiently acquainted with its history, to treat on the subject. The whole work has a tendency to promote free or liberal theological learning, especially through the influence of history. It calls the attention to some rare books. It would lead us to seek the essentials of Christianity in a general moral system of religion, and to judge of its external forms (which are not to be despised) according to the circumstances of the times in which they were assumed. The work however is partial, and, considering its object, contains both too little and too much.

For a considerable time after the publication of these works of Semler, no important work on the subject appeared. After a number of years, Herder's *Letters on the Study of Theology* were published. In a mild and paternal manner, he communicated his elevated sentiments, his wise counsels and experience, his views and wishes for a reformation, especially as it regarded interpretation, articles of faith, and preaching. These letters were not only fitted to direct the student in theology, but to render his studies attractive, important and inter-

resting; to afford him rules and examples how he might prosecute them with spirit and taste, and might unite with them more extensive learning and attention to the literature of his age. New views and hypotheses, versions of the poetical parts of the Bible, originality of style and fertility of imagination, impart to these letters new and diversified attractions. Yet they might have been continued further, and Herder had better devoted to the extension of his work and promoting the spirit of Hebrew poetry, the time and power he bestowed on polemical writings against the critical philosophy.

About the time of the appearance of these letters, the German public heard and read much on the necessity of an entire change in the course of study and mode of education of young men intended for the ministry. It was said that most of the studies which they pursued at the universities were rather injurious than otherwise, in reference to their future office; it was urged that every thing should be directed to the object of making them useful, popular teachers, and to furnish them with knowledge which would be of practical importance; such as natural history and philosophy, economy, medicine, the art of teaching, &c. This course was principally advocated in two works, the one by Bahrdt, the other by Campe. The former censures the whole course of theological study commonly pursued, and undertakes to shew that it ought to be rejected. He thinks that almost all the defects of clergymen may be traced to the mode of their education. He considered that they entered on their studies too soon, pursued a course too short, having no reference to their future office; that they attended lectures merely because they had to be examined upon them, and exhibit testimonials of their attendance. Exegesis, oriental languages, polemics, church history contributed nothing, according to his opinion, to make them fit teachers of the people, these not being the subjects upon which they were afterwards to deliver instruction; the lectures they hear do not produce the facility of popularly delivering useful knowledge, nor contribute to form them for counsellors and examples to their future

congregations in domestic economy and the common affairs of life; it was not the theology which they were taught that could make them suitable teachers of the people, but religion in which they received no instruction; the moral lectures of the university did not serve to form them for their office; since they were nothing more than a mixture of general and positive truths, without unity, connection with theoretical religion, or reference to active life, they were defective in their presentation of motives, and did not point out the way in which men were to be reformed. Bahrdt undertook to present proposals for the better direction of theological study at the universities. Under the head of really useful branches of knowledge, he enumerated philosophy, religion of the New Testament, natural history, natural philosophy, anatomy, arithmetic and geometry, history and literature, introduction to theology, medicine, &c. &c. &c. He reduced the whole of religion to mere morality, and the latter into a matter of expediency, or doctrine of happiness. During the last half year of their course he would allow students to gain some idea of learned theology, which ought to embrace the following subjects: a knowledge of what has been added to religion, or, in other words, of the popular doctrines, a historical view of their gradual rise, a skeleton of church history, a knowledge of the symbolical books, a historical introduction to the books of the New Testament, and theological literature. These proposals, in which truth and falsehood are artfully blended, by which the very existence of the clerical order is subverted, which debar them from theological learning, but impose the necessity of attending to a still greater number of subjects, and which represent the clergy as common teachers of the people, occasioned much opposition from the learned theologians.

It was in part the writings just referred to which induced Noesselt to publish his *Directions for the Education of Clergymen*. He, in this work, settled, with much accuracy and discrimination, the relation of learning to religion and the clerical order; and corrected the prejudices as to the studies which were advocated as exclusive-

ly useful. He shewed, not only what the theologian should study, but also what talents he ought to possess, how he should improve and direct them, and finally how he ought to use the existing institutions, (the universities) for his education. To the preparatory and auxiliary studies, he devoted the whole of the first part of his work. As to the departments of theology itself, he explained their nature and importance, their difficulties, their relation to each other, the rules according to which they should be studied, the extent to which they should be cultivated, &c. This work is distinguished not so much by its novelty and spirit, as by an admirable adaptation to the wants of the age, by an intimate and accurate acquaintance with all parts of theology, by its practical usefulness, and the skill of a learned theological veteran.

A few years after the second edition of the preceding work appeared, Planck's *Introduction to Theological Knowledge* was published. The main object of this work was not to give a new book of directions to the young student, but to excite greater zeal and desire for this science. The study, therefore, he thought should be made more easy and attractive. There should be communicated a clear idea of the nature, object, sources and method of the science, together with an account of its history and literature. This work cannot be considered an Introduction to a regular system of theology ; yet certain essential parts of the Lutheran system, which many learned theologians had rejected, are skilfully defended.

Tittmann published, at Leipzig, under the title of an *Encyclopaedia of Theological Knowledge*—1. An inquiry into the nature, extent, and departments of theology—2. An inquiry into the philological, philosophical, and historical aids in this science.—3. A theological directory, divided into three parts ; the first consisting of instructions how to cultivate the requisite preparatory studies, in what order the subjects should be attended to, how the public lectures could be turned to most advantage, &c. ; the second shows how a system is to be formed, or how we should proceed to make a consistent representation of religious knowledge ; the third prescribes the

manner in which the sacred teacher can most usefully discharge the active duties of his office.

In the works already described, the literature of theology was partially attended to ; other works were written expressly in reference to this subject. Before this period, there did not appear to be so much zeal to collect the whole stock of theological literature, in single books. These books were arranged either in the systematic, chronological or alphabetical order. They generally united, with the mention of the works to which they refer, the expression of the author's opinion on their merits, and other literary remarks. As these works facilitated the acquisition of the knowledge of the progress made in the several departments of theology, they have contributed to its advancement. Yet it is true, that it frequently happened, that students, instead of recurring to the original sources of information, were contented with these secondary streams. Many of these works were nothing more than books of reference to what had been previously written, or at most united with a few remarks on the several subjects of which they professed to treat. Such literary theological works commonly bore the title of *Theological Bibliothecæ*, or *Literary Histories of Theology*. Under the latter title, Pfaff published an extensive work ; which, however, only in a very limited sense, deserves the name of a history : the quotations of books are heaped upon each other without discrimination, without order, and without judgment. We meet with many mistakes, and many instances of negligence. It, however, contains many new and interesting literary notices for that period, especially of English and other foreign works. It, upon the whole, extended the knowledge of theological books. Many documents and essays, which he inserts entire, are indeed foreign to the object of the work, but they are generally such as under other circumstances would have been thankfully received. He exhibits himself as a scholar acquainted with the learned world, and who had prosecuted the history of literature, in some of its most remote and least frequented regions. We meet here and there with proposals for improve-

ments in literature, and suggestions of works which are still needed.

Soon after the appearance of this work, J. C. Dorn published his *Critical Theological Bibliotheca*, which is a production of great diligence and judgment; but clearly evinces that he had not a proper apparatus of books, nor an accurate and comprehensive knowledge of theological literature, which is essential for such a work.

G. Stolle gave, in his *History of Theological Learning*, rather a register of theological books.

J. G. Walch's *Select Theological Library* greatly excelled every other work of this kind. We must not take the word *select* in the strictest sense. Many of his opinions are common-place and of little weight, yet this work will always remain a production admirable for the diligence and for the extensive reading and accuracy which it evinces; the sound judgment remarkable in other works of this theologian, is conspicuous here. All possible aids for theological literature are here embraced. The whole is well arranged; with regard to many books their contents and value are stated, and also directions where more extensive information is to be obtained. Of many important works an extensive and accurate literary history is given. All departments of theology have a rich collection of books pertaining to them described, and abundant materials are furnished for the history of Religion. What related to the Fathers, Walch had treated in a separate work. Among the later shorter works of this kind, that of Noesselt is distinguished by its accuracy, correctness, discrimination, order, and short pithy opinions of the merits of books.

C. M. Pfaffii, *Introductio in historiam theologie literariam*, Tub. 1720. Notis amplissimis quæ novum opus conficiunt, illustrata, 1724.

J. C. Dornii, *Bibliotheca Theologica Critica*, Jen. p. i. 1721, ii. 1723.

G. Stolle, *Anleitung zur Historie der theologischen Gelehrtheit*, Jen. 1739.

J. G. Walchii, *Bibliotheca Theologica Selecta litteraris annotationibus instructa*, Jen. i. 1757, ii. 1758, iii. 1762, iv. 1765.

J. A. Noesselt, *Anweisung zur Kenntniß der besten allgemeinen Bücher in allen Theilen der Theologie*, Leip. 1799, 2te Aug. 1800.

J. P. Müller's *Systematische Anleitung sur Kenntniss auserlesener Bücher in der Theologie und den damit verbundenen Wissenschaften*, Leip. 1781.

From the commencement of the 18th century, until the present time, there has been an unbroken succession of Theological Journals, published in Protestant Germany. The custom became prevalent, principally through the influence of the learned French emigrants. But besides the example of these emigrants, the increasing interest taken in theology, and the constant agitation of important controversies in these publications, greatly promoted their success. At first, the criticism they contained was superficial and unimportant. They were however enriched with interesting articles, essays, remarks, &c.; they contained notices of rare books, of inscriptions and coins, (which had any relation to theology,) anecdotes, unedited letters, historical records, &c. &c. They served as a medium of attack upon the followers of Spener, and the disciples of Wolf; they for a long time, with zeal and energy, opposed the numerous innovations in theology, and endeavoured to uphold the genuine Lutheran system, until at length they themselves became infected with the prevalent spirit of infidelity. Their critical character became gradually more learned, profound, and instructing.

In the Reformed Church, theological learning pursued a course analogous to that through which it passed in the Evangelical Church. The fate of theology in different countries in which the Reformed Church was established, was various; but this diversity can be better exhibited, when we treat of the particular branches of theology. Works of the kind we have been now considering, were not very numerous among the reformed, nor of much repute. Before the expiration of the 17th century, Stephen Gaußen, professor at Saumur, had written a *Treatise on the Course of Theological Study*, discussing the nature of theology, the use of philosophy, and the method of preaching; which was reprinted several times during the 18th. In this work we remark the faults of his

age, but it contains many important observations and directions. J. Heinr. Heidegger, of Heidelberg, wrote a *Model for Theological Students*, in which he collected much which had been previously published in other works, and made many additions from his own resources. He wished that less attention should be paid to polemics, and gave his work rather a moral than a doctrinal cast. In the Netherlands, the sciences, criticism, and the oriental languages, were zealously cultivated as aids in the study of theology.

In many parts of the Catholic Church, great progress was made in every department of knowledge connected with theology. They emulated the Protestants; and although no change or improvement was effected in their established system of doctrine, yet they were unwilling to be left behind in the prosecution of learning, and were not ashamed to avail themselves of the discoveries and improvements of the Protestants. Since Rich. Simon, the criticism which he directed to the whole compass of Roman Catholic theology, obtained many liberal defenders and cultivators; although the number of these who opposed its progress, still continued the most considerable. The Oriental languages retained their chairs in the Catholic Universities. Theology and its cognate branches of knowledge, were more divided and more extensively prosecuted. Theological seminaries were multiplied, and improved. The congregation of St. Maurus and the Fathers of the Oratory were conspicuous for their diligence and zeal, and other learned Catholics have by their services in ecclesiastical history thrown light upon every part of theology. The suppression of the Jesuits produced greater liberty of the press, allowed the new principles of Interpretation greater influence, and lessened the constraint of pedantry and scholasticism. The strict ancient Catholic system was attacked with the weapons of learning, even in Italy. Many Catholic princes and bishops endeavoured, in various ways, to promote the interests of learning; and to improve the method of studying theology. All this manifested itself principally in Germany, and indeed first in Salzburg in Austria, in the

States of the Electorates of Meissen and Bavaria, and in Warzburg. Here the last struggles of the Jesuits were made for maintaining their influence. In Austria, in the year 1776, appeared, under the Empress Maria Theresa, *The Instruction for all the Theological Faculties in the Empire*. The author of this work was Rautenstrauch, a Benedictine, whom the Empress had made Director of the Theological Faculty of Vienna. The whole spirit and method of teaching, as regards theology, would have been changed by this book, and would have received a completely practical tendency. The Sacred Scriptures were represented as the only proper original ground of theological knowledge. Scholasticism and Jesuitical Camisstry were proscribed, and Polemics very much moderated. Great stress was laid upon the study of the Oriental Languages. Ecclesiastical History, it taught, should be prosecuted with moral and religious views. The cultivation of Biblical Hermeneutics was expressly enjoined. After attending to these subjects, Didactic and Catechetical Theology were to be studied. In Church Government, the Decretal was no longer to be followed, but some more liberal system. Not until the fifth and last year of the course, were the Ascetic, Catechetical or Homiletic departments, nor Pastoral Theology and Polemics to be attended to. Under Joseph II. the freedom of opinion, and liberty of the press, were still further increased. Theology was now from the pulpit and the press treated in a much better spirit, and purified from many of its errors. This liberal spirit had begun to diffuse itself, but political events have since, not only suppressed it in Austria, and restored the direction of Theology to the Monks, but withdrawn the attention of Catholics from these subjects; so that the encouragements of various kinds which had been held out to theological learning, have failed of producing any important results.

The 18th century produced works, which treated of Ecclesiastical writers, their lives, the contents, worth, and editions of their works, much more extensive and valuable than any which preceded them. These works refer so directly to all parts of Theology, (which they have con-

tributed much to enlighten) and have so enriched the history of theological literature, that they deserve here a most honourable mention. We can however only notice those which are the most comprehensive and important, passing by others which relate either only to one class of authors or to one particular age or nation. Dupin's *Bibliotheca of Ecclesiastical Authors*, which he commenced publishing in 1686, and completed in 1714, is the most extensive work of this nature. As an Introduction he has given Prolegomena to the Bible. The work itself contains a Biography of Ecclesiastical Authors, a catalogue of their works, their chronological order, and their various editions; it presents also an epitome of their contents, and an examination of their style and opinions, with many other particulars connected with Church History and Chronology. It commences with the first century, and continues to the 18th. What is properly Bibliographical in the work, is not always sufficiently accurate, the Epitomes are often incorrect and negligent, many articles are of no value, and with respect to authors, not of the Catholic communion, there is much mistake and injustice. Yet the work possesses, and must continue to possess, a value which overbalances all these defects. The judgments given are discriminating and liberal, and the several authors are properly characterized. This work procured for Dupin two classes of opposers. The one found much that was too liberal and contrary to the true Catholic faith. The Archbishop of Paris condemned it, and forced its author to a public recantation of some of its parts. Bishop Bossuet also complained of his style of criticism, and pointed out many passages as erroneous, especially relating to doctrines and church government. The other class, on the contrary, complained that his criticisms were not liberal enough, nor sufficiently accurate. This was especially the case with Richard Simon, whom Dupin had provoked by a previous attack. Simon exhibited many mistakes committed by his antagonist, and shewed himself his superior in profoundness, originality, sagacity, and extent of learning, although he frequently did him injustice.

Whilst this work of Dupin was publishing, a *Literary History of Ecclesiastical Writers*, by Will. Cave, an English professor, made its appearance. This work does not treat of the *contents* of the writings of ecclesiastical authors, but with much minuteness details every thing which relates to their lives, to their genuine, doubtful or spurious works, and the various editions of them, and to those which have never been published, or which have perished. This work was published gradually under the direction of Cave; and, with the assistance of another individual, was constantly enlarged, though it never exceeded the size originally designed. At first, it reached only to the 14th century, but he afterwards brought it as low as the Reformation. It contains notices of all the heathen writers who opposed Christianity. It is divided into centuries, to each of which is affixed a distinct title, as the *Apostolic*, the *Gnostic*, *Novatian*, *Arian*, *Nestorian*, *Eutychian*, &c. &c. To each century is prefixed a historical view of its principal events; then follows an account of all the ecclesiastical writers, in chronological order; and finally, a notice of all the ecclesiastical councils, whether general or provincial, which occurred during the period.

Cas. Oudin, Librarian of the University of Leyden, found that the authors who had written on the Ecclesiastical Writers, as Possevin, Labbe, Cave and Dupin, had passed over many authors without notice, and had committed a great number of mistakes. He made it therefore his object, in his great work, which he brought down to the year 1460, to supply the deficiencies of these authors, and present a supplement to their works, without however confining himself strictly to this object. He treated of a great number of unedited, and hitherto unknown works, which he had found out in the Libraries. He upbraided Cave with not having read and studied the ancient authors himself, but gleaned his account of them from others, and with having regarded many works as genuine which are really spurious. Of Dupin he expressed a more favourable opinion. He himself intentionally abstained from any thing of a doctrinal character, that

his work might not offend the Catholics ; he did not even investigate what the Fathers taught or wrote upon any doctrine, nor did he give any analysis of their works. He therefore had the more leisure to devote himself to the investigation of their history, of the spuriousness or genuineness of their works, and their number and editions of them.

Louis Ellies Dupin, Nouvelle Bibliothèque des auteurs Ecclesiastiques, Paris, 1686—1711, 47 voll.

Scriptorum Ecclesiasticorum historia litteraria, a C. N., usque ad Sec. 14, a Guliel. Cave, Ox. 1740—1743.

Cas. Oudin, Commentarius de Scrip. Eccl. Antiquis illorumque scriptis, adhuc extantibus in Bibliothecis Europeæ, a Bellarmino, Caveo, Dupin, et aliis omissis, Lip. 3 vol. 1722.

DISCOURSE

ON THE

RIGHT MORAL INFLUENCE AND USE

OF

LIBERAL STUDIES.

BY THE

HON. GULIAN C. VERPLANCK, LL. D.

EDINBURGH:

THOMAS CLARK, 38, GEORGE STREET.

MDCCCXXXV.



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DISCOURSE

THE course of liberal education is completed, and the youthful student stands for the last time upon his academic threshold, eager to plunge into the throng of active life. The world lies fresh and green before him, whilst in the distance—a distance which his confident anticipation seems to overleap at a single bound—the rewards of enterprize and ability, the bright prizes of wealth or of glory glitter in his view.

In this hour of young and stirring excitement, ere he rushes forth to the attainment or the disappointment of his hopes—destined, as he most surely is, in either case, to find how different are the realities of life from their early seeming—let me invite him to pause for a moment, and with me to cast back a hasty glance on the studies and acquisitions of his college life. Let us consider together what are the fruits of those studies, and weigh the advantages placed within his reach by education.

Unless he has been singularly ill-taught, or worse misled by his own vanity, he will know and deeply feel that the learning he has now gained, is but an imperfect fragment of the science actually acquired by man, and far smaller and more imperfect still, when compared with the knowledge within the ultimate grasp of the human intellect. He will feel too, and willingly confess, the feeble-ness and darkness of human reason itself, in its highest

state of mortal perfection. But that learned humility, thus rebuking intellectual pride and checking presumption, will not make him undervalue the treasures of true science, or chill his gratitude for being enabled to know their worth and extent. How abundant, how varied, how magnificent is the wealth of that intellectual treasury thus laid open to him! But how does that magnificence grow upon us, filling us with reverent awe, when we reflect that the science and literature of the present generation are the accumulated fruits of the labour, patience, observation, experience, experiments, sagacity, and genius of countless myriads of minds all guided to one end and combined and harmonized in one common purpose, by the overruling providence of the Father of lights, who as it seemed good to him, from time to time, put wisdom and understanding into the hearts of men. That common purpose is no other than the improvement of the human race.

The Chaldean shepherd solaces the long hours of his nightly watch by noting the silent and grand regularity of the heavenly bodies in their real or apparent motions. The Egyptian magistrate or priest, compelled by the yearly overflow of his Nile, sweeping away artificial metes and bounds, to make an annual re-survey of the cultivated lands of the country, is led to the practical discovery of some of the elementary problems and propositions of geometry. Thence he slowly advances to the speculative perception and demonstrative proof of certain primary truths, as being the unchanging laws of figure and motion, whose evidence rising above the observation of mere fact, is found in the logical certainty of pure reason. Next, these few elementary observations and propositions are carried as precious revelations of hidden wisdom to Greece, and there excite and exercise the acute intellects of the master-spirits among a nation of thinkers and reasoners. As centuries move forward, states and kingdoms rise and fall. The broad walls of the great Babylon of the Chaldeans are broken; her streets, where nations met uncrowded, become a solitude and a desolation. The sands are heaped up high around the Pyramids and Sphynxes, the massive and enduring monuments of Egyptian power and

folly. Then, the Roman eagle spreads its huge wings over the fairest portions of the earth and overshadows the civilized world. But in its turn that iron dominion dissolves away like a mist before the fierce blasts from the Barbarian North, meeting the whirlwind that, arising from the Arabian deserts, swept over the plains and palaces and cities of Asia and the shores of Europe.

Meanwhile, solitary and thoughtful men brooded over the mysteries of extension and magnitude and numbers and proportion. In the Athenian groves and porticoes, in the tent of the Arabian sage, and in the convent, cloister, heedless of the rise or fall of empires, the work went silently on. Link by link the everlasting golden chain of geometrical reasoning was drawn out. The properties and relations of numbers gradually unfolded themselves. The symbolic notation of Algebra, at first merely an ingenious form of universal arithmetic, becomes a most efficacious instrument of geometrical reasoning and invention. As stage after stage is gained in the steep ascent, other and vaster truths continually open upon the view. Demonstration and analysis are every hour presenting new results, which, transcending the elements wherein they were generated, indicate still more comprehensive laws of being, or unveil deeper mysteries of that necessary and mathematical truth so infinite in its combinations, so grandly simple in its entire unity.

Still the generalization of the laws of matter and motion, the unity and mutual coherence of all truth, are destined to receive yet further illustration and evidence. Those manufacturing arts, left to the ingenuity of slaves, by the self-sufficient speculative philosophy of antiquity, now come forward to arm the modern man of science with additional powers. The Telescope, an instrument which, in its present perfection, exhibits the highest ingenuity of philosophical invention, combined with the most exquisite mechanical skill,—the telescope brings the heavens within the field of closer and more accurate observation. Thus, the mathematical astronomy of the nineteenth century presents one of the grand results of the genius and arts of four thousand years. How sublime

is it in theory! In its application to the uses and wants of man, how practical! Now, mark, how prodigious is the interval that separates the elementary speculations of Egypt, and the traditional astronomy of the Chaldean soothsayers, from the present state of art and science, when new celestial bodies have been discovered, in consequence of theoretic reasoning on their probable existence, and of calculations of their presumed orbits; or when La Grange could ascertain mathematically the law of the inequalities of the planetary motions and show that these apparent irregularities were in fact regular and periodical, and that, correcting and compensating their own acceleration and retardations, they left the mean distance of each planet from the sun and its mean motion perfectly constant, thus furnishing the strongest evidence of that pervading law of gravitation and of the consequent order and stability of the celestial mechanism, which this remarkable phenomenon at first appeared to disturb or contradict. But this interval could only have been filled up, and these wonderful conclusions of science attained, by the incessant mental toil of numerous acute, patient, and daring intellects, through myriads of days of thought and nights of watching.

What I have thus imperfectly intimated in regard to Mathematics and Astronomy, is not less true with respect to physical, chemical, and mechanical science. It is an immense body of methodized and arranged knowledge, some of it learnt by experience and experiment, and some part deduced from the workings of the pure reason, but in either case much beyond the reach of any single and unaided mind. Accumulated by the slow toil of centuries, it grows simpler and clearer in its exposition as it increases in extent and value, and thus becomes the property of ordinary talent and industry.

Turn we now to those other parts of learning, that come more intimately home to human affections and feelings—those relating immediately to man, his history, his character, his genius, taste, sentiments, passions. There is History, placing us as it were upon the mount of speculation, such as that whither Milton imagined our first

parents to have been led by the pitying angel. Thence, like them, we may behold the fate, the woes, and the blessings of our race. There is Biography, bringing to our familiar acquaintance the just and wise of other days, the models of virtue, the examples of life, whom we revere as our guides and benefactors ; " led by their light, and by their wisdom wise." There is that political and economical Philosophy, which deduces from the joint lessons of history and of living human nature, the rules whereby the resources of nations may be best developed and applied, and the greatest amount of comfort and happiness diffused among the greatest number of citizens. There, too, is that Mental Philosophy, that so long and so vainly strove to solve the riddle of man's nature, nor feared to lift its inquiries to the throne of the Almighty. Baffled and perplexed in those bold reasonings, it yet in the very attempt after unattainable certainty, tried and ascertained the strength and the limits of mortal intellects, and laid open the true foundations of the rights and duties of human nature. Like the Alchemist, whose vain, but indefatigable researches after the brilliant phantoms of his dreams, were rewarded by the most useful processes and products of chemistry, the chemist of the mind was taught by long experience to check his roving fancy, and at last to learn,

That, not to know of things remote
From use, obscure and subtle, but to know
That which before us lies, in daily life
Is the prime wisdom.*

There, too, are those languages dead and living, which, whilst they give ready access to the knowledge and literature of men, trained under states of society and modes of thought strangely different from our own, are themselves the most curious products and the most faithful records of man's character and thoughts, from his simplest to his most refined and artificial state of intellectual and moral culture. There also are the eloquence, the litera-

* Milton.

ture, the poetry of all times and tongues—those glorious efforts of genius that rule, with a never-dying sway, over our sympathies and affections, commanding our smiles and tears, kindling the imagination, warming the heart, filling the fancy with beauty, and awing the soul with the sublime, the terrible, the powerful, the infinite.

Ye grand inventions of ancient bards,—ye gay creations of modern fancy,—ye bright visions,—ye fervid and impassioned thoughts,—serve ye all for no better purpose than the pastime of an idle hour?

Ah, not so,—not so. It is yours to stir to the bottom the dull and stagnant soul; ye can carry man out of himself, and make him feel his kindred with his whole race. Ye can teach him to look beyond external and physical nature for enjoyment and for power. Ye rouse him from the deep lethargy of sense, raise him above “the worthless thing we are,” and reveal to him his capacity for purer purposes and a nobler state of being.

I have just noticed a peculiar aspect of the present advanced state of mathematical and physical science with which I have been often and forcibly impressed; I mean the fact that so little of it is the direct product of any single genius, but that the whole is the aggregate effect of multitudes of insulated intellectual efforts, combined with apparently accidental circumstances, all brought marvellously to coalesce in one immense and harmonious system. This consideration presents to my mind, a beautiful historical and intellectual evidence of wise and beneficent intention superintending and directing the thoughts and labours of men, giving to them relations and bearings unknown to ourselves, and guiding them all to one common and wonderful end. This strikes me as being singularly analogous to those manifestations of wise and benevolent skill which the scientific teachers of natural theology have traced in the anatomical construction of man and animals, their several parts being adapted with matchless art to each other and to the uses of the whole, whilst the multiplied contrivance and infinite variety of all animated and inanimate nature are adjusted in exquisite proportion to one and the same vast plan,

bearing throughout the impress of goodness and wisdom.

In a somewhat analogous manner was formed and heaped up that varied and splendid mass of literature which fills the library of the modern scholar. To create the rough materials of that literature, myriads of human beings must have thought, and felt, and acted, and suffered. The creative genius of the most original of the writers of our own day, even of those who are commonly thought self-taught men, must have borrowed the groundwork of its inventions or speculations from past events, and doubtless owed much of its elevation, excitement, and splendour, to the poets, authors, or orators of former ages.

The inspiration of the master-spirits of other times, glides like the electric fluid from man to man, until its flame lights up in some distant but congenial breast, where, probably, their own words and thoughts have never directly reached. Burns, for instance, original and fresh from nature's mint, as his glowing lay confessedly is, could scarcely have been what he was, had Homer and Horace never lived,—had not the common mind of his age and nation, and thus, incidently, his own, been influenced and modified, been exalted and refined, by the warlike and trumpet-tongued muse of Homer and the laughing wisdom of Horace.* Now the poems of Homer and Horace are but the product and the proof of a fore-gone and multitudinous activity of thought, passion, and action, in successive generations of men who were once interested and agitated by plans, schemes, and contests, by emotions, rivalries, strifes, ambition, and pleasures, which have long been stilled for ever; like the waves that in those days broke over the rocks of the Egean or foamed in the stormy Adriatic. Thus the fathers of poetry and eloquence owed the education of their minds and drew the aliment of their thoughts from men and deeds now hidden in the dark domains of that mysterious and unrelenting PAST, where, in the solemn strains of one of the poets of our own land :†

* Ridentem dicere verum.—HOR.

† Bryant.

Far in thy realms withdrawn
 Old empires sit in sullenness and gloom,
 And glorious ages gone
 Lie deep within the shadow of thy womb.

In thy abysses hide
 Beauty and excellence unknown. To thee
 Earth's wonder and her pride
 Are gathered, as the waters to the sea.

Full many a mighty name
 Lurks in thy depths, unuttered, unrevered,
 With thee are silent Fame,
 Forgotten arts and wisdom disappeared.

The great works handed down to us from antiquity resemble those immense mounds or forts found on our western plains, the monumental and the sole remains of whole nations who have vanished for ever from the earth, whose fame, whose power, whose genius, exploits, character, history, whose very name and language are no more.

All this must have existed and passed away, and been succeeded by reason, and fancy, and cool sagacity, and passionate enthusiasm, they too, in their turn, gliding to the same dim dominions of forgetfulness ; and the whole but preparatory for the creation of such literature as belongs to us and our children.

But I may be told that this profusion of scientific and literary wealth is scarcely within the hope of the mature and laborious scholar, much less in the possession of the youthful graduate. Thence you may infer, that I am giving you a false and exaggerated statement of the benefits and excellence of a liberal education. Yet let me ask, whether the well-instructed youth has not at least been made familiar with the outline and map of the whole territory of human knowledge ? Has he not (unless he has wilfully neglected his advantages) been trained to those habits of continuous reasoning and patient attention that fit and prepare him for the highest acquisitions ? Has not the memory been exercised and the reason instructed, whilst the dull labours of elementary learning were mastered ? The key of knowledge has been put in-

to the student's hands, and he has already received many a precious earnest and specimen of those mental riches which he has but to desire strongly and he can enjoy abundantly.

In those strangely beautiful eastern tales that fascinate our childhood, and rarely lose their charm in our riper years, you all recollect how the gorgeous imagination of the oriental authors delights to luxuriate upon the story of some young and bold adventurer, who wanders alone through the deep caverns of the earth, and there sees around him piles of golden ingots and coin, and massive plate and burnished armour, hillocks of pearls and rubies, and sapphires, and emeralds, and diamonds, of all of which the mystic talisman he unconsciously bears in his bosom has made him the lord.

To the young student of our own times and country, the discipline of a thorough education is that talisman ; though of far more potent command than the one of oriental fable. Thus armed, he may climb the Muse's mount or penetrate the deepest retreats of science. There he will find hoards more precious than countless gold or priceless gems. He has but to desire them intensely, and they become his own ; for they are to be found the Genii of arts, able to change the face of nature and subdue the very elements ; there dwell those pure and bright intelligences that sway the heart of man, and mould to their own pleasure the opinions and passions of nations. Mighty and proud spirits are they, who will not be commanded by wealth or power, but they bow themselves down before the daring and persevering student, voluntarily confessing themselves to be " the slaves of the lamp and of him who is its master."

But why—you may justly ask me—why, and for what end are these praises of education, this recapitulation of the glories of science and the riches of literature, all of which has already our full and unhesitating assent ? It is not, I reply, to flatter the vanity of scholars that I thus speak, or to contribute in any degree towards leading you to think yourselves wiser or better than other men. My main object, in thus reminding you of these topics, was to

infer from the consideration of these glories and benefits of study, that of the duties which they impose. Let me then, for a short time, claim your attention and ask you to consider with me, what ought to be the moral influence of a sound and liberal education.

It is to the consideration of what *ought* to be, that I now invite you, not to that of what *must be* or commonly *is*. I would speak of the just influence of such studies, not of their necessary or even ordinary effect. I would speak not of the selfish, or worse than selfish purposes of intellectual pride or personal ambition which they may subserve, but of the legitimate and awful claims of society, of our country, of the human race, of the moral constitution of our nature, of the great Author of being and fountain of all wisdom, upon the scholar in every country, but especially in our own, for the proper government and improvement of his faculties and the right application of his acquirements.

It was a profound as well as a pleasing view of ethical philosophy that led some of the wisest of moralists to define Virtue, to be "the living according to Nature." *

* The ethical doctrine referred to, is that held by the ancient Stoic philosophers, though vaguely and imperfectly explained by them and often paradoxically expressed. It is stated more clearly and satisfactorily by Bishop Butler, and forms the basis of his theory of morals, which teaches us to consider the relation of the several powers and passions of man to each other, and to his state and condition, and above all to the supremacy of conscience, and thus to view the inward frame of man as one moral whole. From this idea it is inferred that virtue is the end or object of our constitution, just as from the idea or theory of the mechanism of a watch it appears that its nature or design is to measure time. What in fact may prove to be the actual result cannot shew any thing as to what it *ought* to be, according to the intent of the framer. Any work of art or design may be out of order from the disproportionate excess or want of power in any of its parts, but this is so far from being according to the intention of the work, that if the disorder is increased, it wholly defeats that intention. So man may, and does continually act according to the inclination or impulse which happens to be strongest at the moment, and without reference to the other parts of his nature or the just authority of conscience and reason; but this is to act in a manner indicating a disordered moral constitution, and violating his own right and proper nature.

They did not mean by this that it was virtue to live the creature of instinct and passion, blindly following or giving way to any natural impulse or propensity that might be strongest at the moment, without looking forward to the future, or backward to the past, without reflection and without conscience. They deemed more justly of man. They regarded him as a complex being, who had numerous appetites, affections, and powers implanted in his breast, suited to the varied relations and destinies that surround and await him. All of these propensities and faculties have their right and fitting use, and it is for the rational or spiritual part of his constitution, to direct and restrain them to their proper and therefore natural ends. Every one of them obeying this guidance will conduce to the happiness and constitute the virtue of man ; and each of them, when that rule is thrown off, acting unnaturally, contradicts the obvious intent of the Creator, and thus

— Strained from that fair use
Revolts from true birth, stumbling on abuse.

Thus also is it in regard to the gifts of intellectual culture. The intent of their author is legibly stamped upon them, but they are confided to the trust of man, who cannot, indeed, wholly destroy their native tendency, but who may pervert them to selfish or malignant aims. The scholar may turn his wholesome learning into the stimulus and the food of a poor and frivolous vanity. Physical science may be abused to inflate a swollen and sceptical and self-sufficient pride of intellect. The imagination may be excited and indulged until the possessor shrinks back from the cold realities and stern duties of society to dream away existence ; or it may be pampered and polluted and poisoned until it teems with pestilence and death. If such were indeed the certain and unfailing issues of liberal studies—far be they from us and ours. Perish for ever the winged words, the breathing thoughts, the living images of beauty. Return, ye old ages of darkness, roll your thick clouds over our land, and shroud

for ever from our eyes the clear fixed lights of science and the dazzling blaze of genius.

But it is not so. Such is not their true office. Such need not be their effect. View them as they are in themselves. Read the impress they bear, ere they become worn by the world's commerce or defaced by the evil inventions of the wicked. They bear the very image and superscription of TRUTH. The object of all scientific inquiry is Truth. The severe analysis of Reason leads us step by step to the laws of universal and necessary Truth. Physical observation and experiment enable the Philosopher to infer the general truth of nature from millions of individual instances. Virtue, and Right, and Duty, are the great objects of moral and metaphysical science, and of legal ethics; yet these are but other names for moral Truth. Nay, that literature which lies within the immediate domain of the imagination, has its origin and the source of its charm in Truth alone. It is from nature only that the poet, the author, the orator, who pleases or who rules widely and long, must obtain the materials of his invention, the airy forms of his fancy, and the torrent-like excitement of his impassioned fervour. Human sympathy is the source of their charm, their interest, and their control; but that sympathy can be awakened only by the truth of feeling and the reflection of nature. The study of Truth then, not as modified by accident, not as limited and narrowed in particular and individual instances, but of Truth, either universal or general, is the business of the scholar. Can then the noblest exercise of the reason, the most excellent gift of heaven, be designed for any but worthy uses? Can man's misuse, make vain the precious gift, and turn it into a curse?

The sacred light of day which rises sweet and pleasant to mortals, chasing away darkness and unhealthy vapours, and pouring floods of warmth and gladness upon the earth, may aid the wicked in their craft, gild the tyrant's pomp, or beam brightly upon fields of carnage. Still its ethereal stream flows on pure and bounteous, shining upon the evil and the good; undiminished and untainted

by earth's ingratitude or corruption. Even so is it with the holier light of Truth.

All, therefore, that Society need to claim from her sons, whom the nurture of a sound education has trained to the meditation and comprehension of general truth, is that they would allow the habits thus formed, and the knowledge thus acquired, to have their natural influence and effect undisturbed and unperverted. Then will the mind put forth its energies in natural and graceful strength, the operations and attainments of the intellect harmonizing calmly and regularly with the right morals and gentler feelings of the heart. In that fit and hallowed union, the understanding and the conscience, the genius and the affections move together in healthful concord, diffusing cheerful activity throughout the intellectual frame, and abounding in thoughts of good and labours of love to mankind.

Every branch of human science, every part of learning, the acquisition of which is at all worthy the labour of study, bears plainly upon its surface the self-evidence of its having been intended for the use and benefit of mankind, either for the increase of their physical comfort, for their pleasure and gratification, for their command over material nature, or for their moral or intellectual improvement. The natural and obvious application of any of them which first suggests itself to the student, is either one of practical utility, or else, at least, of innocent pleasure to others than himself. It is the after thought, the secondary, though unhappily too frequent, application, suggested by selfishness or by bad passion, which alone turns true knowledge and mental power to injurious uses.

Again, as I have already observed, all high attainment in science and all cultivated literary talent carry with them, independently of their external history, the conviction that such attainments are beyond our own unaided powers, and that we owe them to the successive efforts of past generations. But this reflection alone, is sufficient to prove to the scholar, that he has no selfish or exclusive property in his acquirements, and that, entering as he does, upon the labours of others and enjoy-

ing their fruits, he holds these possessions but in trust for the common good.

The study of languages, literature, and strict science, whether pursued under academic direction or in solitary and unassisted application, must have more or less formed the student to the exercise of attention and comparison, and ultimately to habits of contemplation and investigation. If these habits are fixed, and the native faculties thus invigorated, you have within you the rudiments of a power capable of extending far forwards the boundaries of human knowledge, and spreading the conquests of mind over regions never yet trodden by a single exploring footstep.

It surely needs no train of moral demonstration to prove that such a power imposes upon you the duty of at least striving to exert it. If you are successful you may augment the happiness, you may remove or assuage the miseries of your fellow-creatures for years, for ages to come. This does not of necessity demand of you the undivided devotion of your life, or the abandonment of the ordinary duties and cares of society. The elements of thought, of improvement, of discovery, are about you. The grandest of these may not be beyond your grasp. Those apparently the most insignificant, provided only they be real accessions to the previous stock of knowledge, are not to be despised; for they may be pregnant with momentous consequences. They may have relations to be traced by some future observer, when they will be discovered to be the minute but constituent parts of some important invention, or some salutary truth. The slight seedling that you tread upon with careless indifference may infold some life-giving tree, which will one day swell out its huge bulk, and throw forth its far-reaching branches, shading and sheltering weary nations, and dropping the balm of healing from its leaves. Nay, more, you know not, and unless you cherish the desire, you can never know, whether yours may not be the exalted lot and privilege, by your own immediate labours, to hasten forward the great destinies of man's knowledge and happiness.

NEWTON, from the most familiar circumstances, and the observation of the most trivial phenomena, is led to deduce the sublimest and most useful generalizations of human science.

PASCAL is excited by the accidental inquiry of an acquaintance, in relation to certain chances of dice, to the investigation of the theory of probabilities, and thus to lay the foundation of that most ingenious mathematical analysis of chances, which has since been fruitful in numerous useful applications to the business of life. His hours of sickness and pain were amused or solaced by those profound and original views of human nature, which, undeveloped and fragmentary as he left them, have been admired and studied by divines and by philosophers, and have guided them to the purest and deepest wisdom.

FRANKLIN—the self-taught Franklin—(whose example I the more willingly select, because he had disciplined his own mind, by a much more thorough education than can be boasted of by far the greatest number of those crowned with academic honours, and whose life thus affords an evidence of the worth of that training which it is sometimes used as an argument to undervalue), Franklin, in the very recreations of his diligent life, remarks and applies some of the most useful properties of heat, and ascertains the principle and the laws of electricity. The self-same habit of regulated and instructed activity of mind applied in another direction, led him to those clear and just views of human dealing, and those maxims of large and sound, though plain, household wisdom, that have proved the cause of independence and happiness to thousands of his countrymen.

MANSFIELD ascends the bench at a period when the law of personal property and commercial transactions was a confused mass of blind tradition, half settled usage and arbitrary decision. He arranges, he analyses, he rejects. He borrows from the civilians the rich materials of their ancient law. He lays deep, the solid foundations of justice and natural equity. He rears aloft the stately structure of commercial policy. The great work, it is true, is left incomplete by his hand, but the reign of rational jurisprudence is begun.

Nor is it only in the dignity and theoretical improvement of legal science that the effect of Mansfield's genius and learning is to be traced. We may see and feel that effect every where and every hour. Scarcely a single cause can be decided in Great Britain, or the United States, or a contract of insurance, or other commercial transaction entered into, which is not in some way most beneficially affected by the influence of his clear and sagacious mind.

Perhaps a still more brilliant example, and one yet more capable of firing the praiseworthy ambition of ingenuous youth, may be found in the history of Political and Public Law. Two centuries ago, the differences between nations, and the collision of sovereigns were not only without any common arbiter, but could not be referred to any recognized rule of political action or decision, bearing with it the authority of reason, and commanding respect, if not obedience. Arms and battle could alone decide upon the claims of public justice and humanity. Strength, therefore, in international law was right, and the thunder of cannon, was the logic of kings. Such was the state of the civilized world, when a Dutch Lawyer, without official station, or political power, in exile, and in poverty, applied his mind to the consideration of the rights and duties of nations, and the rational and natural laws of peace and war.*

His memory was fraught with the lore of all antiquity ; the active discharge of public and private duties, had made him conversant with mankind and their concerns ; his reason had been sharpened by the study and application of the principles of justice and equity between man and man, as taught in the Roman law. But in him, the proud stoical philosophy of the ancient civilians, had been soften-

* The latter years, as well as the early life of **HUGO GROTIUS**, were prosperous, and passed in the discharge of honourable and competently lucrative public offices ; but his great work, *De Jure Belli ac Pacis*, appears to have been written and published in France, not long after his escape from imprisonment in Holland, to which he had been sentenced for life, and where his whole estate had been confiscated by the dominant political party.

ed, tamed, and humanized by the mild teaching of Christian benevolence. In the severe school of adversity and persecution, he had been practically taught the lessons of toleration and humanity ; he had there learnt to cherish and to reverence private rights, and conscience, and happiness, and to dread the abuses of unrestrained power. These sentiments he enforced by the experience of history, the arguments of philosophy, and the authority of religion, and embodied them in a work remarkable alike for its lavish profusion of rare and varied learning, and its power of original thought. He closed his immortal volume, with a prayer of solemn eloquence, invoking " God, who alone could work such marvels, to write these truths upon the hearts of the rulers of Christendom, giving them an understanding to discern true justice, and to reverence their fellow-creatures, as a race beloved of heaven."* It was a grand and bold undertaking. Magnanimous were its motives, its auspices hallowed, and its influence blessed. His doctrines were at the time received by the great ones of the earth, as the pedantic theories of a dreaming scholar. But they were not therefore lost. Before another generation had wholly passed away, they had formed to themselves a public opinion among reading and thinking men, and thus created an august tribunal before which kings and statesmen were compelled to bow. Like some healing oil, they soothed and relieved the wounds of civil discord, and of national warfare. They spread themselves over the waves of the sea, and the vexed billows became calm. Sea robbery was checked, and legalized warfare began to respect and acknowledge the rights of the merchant, and the flag of the neutral. A second century is scarcely ended, and contending nations meet in negotiation and argument on subjects upon which they would formerly have met in arms, referring their most valued interests to be settled by the reasoning

* " *Inscribat haec Deus (qui solus hoc potest,) cordibus eorum, quorum res Christiana in manu est, et iisdem mentem divini, humanique juris intelligentem duit, quæque semper cogitet lectam se ministram ad regendos homines, *Deo carissimum animal.*" — *Grotius De Jure Belli ac Pacis.* Concluding paragraph of the work.*

or even the authority of HUGO GROTIUS, and his disciples.

Thus much having already been achieved, what limit can we place to the glorious and peaceful influence of the Father of international law?

But the grandeur of exploits such as this, and those I have before alluded to, perhaps overwhelms us. We despair of rivalling them. We shrink back dazzled by the effulgence of fame that surrounds them. If this diffidence of ourselves arises from a just, a prudent, or an humble estimate of our own talents, it cannot be blamed. But you may imitate what you cannot equal. We may tread in the same path with those benefactors of the world, though with a slower and less confident step. Every positive addition to the stock of actual information, however small, is so much gained to human nature. Besides, if we cannot ourselves contribute directly to improvement or discovery in art or science, we have scarcely a less obligatory, or a less pleasing task to perform in their reception, their preservation, and above all in their dissemination.

Those, to whom education, leisure, or natural capacity, has given knowledge, are the appointed judges of truth in the first instance. To their inspection every accession to its stores is first presented. To them every great improvement commonly comes attended with the usual imperfections of recent discovery, and begirt with difficulties and objections. Its evidence is often doubtful, its results may be revolting to the prejudices, or threatening the interests of some class of the community. Perhaps the comprehension and proof of it may be abstruse or complicated, depending upon a chain of inquiry or demonstration, demanding patient attention or laborious research. The natural judges of truth then, and they alone, must overcome these hinderances; their labours must remove objections and clear away doubts for the less enlightened. Their decision must authenticate the nature and value of the doctrine or invention; or, if haply, interest or envy should oppose its way, then it becomes their proud office to form a voluntary cohort in

its defence, to baffle and beat down its adversaries, and at last to swell the pomp and join in the loud acclamations of its triumph.

In this age, and this country of universal elementary instruction, new facilities at once, and new inducements are constantly given for the extensive diffusion of good knowledge. Much of practical science, physical, moral, and political, to be useful at all, must be made the common property of the people. It must, as it were, be taken up into the system of the body politic, and mix with its whole circulation. The means are at our command. Through our well-devised common school systems, through our numerous and extensively circulating journals, through conversation, domestic instruction, public discourses, lectures, books of education, and popular reading, the laws and conclusions of science, and not unfrequently its processes and reasonings, may be made familiar to all classes. Those doctrines and opinions, that in the last generation were admitted slowly and cautiously, perhaps doubtfully, by some few learned and speculative men on the conviction of their understandings, in opposition to the strong bias of their early impressions, can now be made elementary propositions, familiar maxims, household words to a whole people. This is to be accomplished almost entirely by the agency of well-instructed men scattered throughout society, who, according to their several stations, occupations, and capacities, act as conductors of knowledge, leading it off from its accumulated stores, and spreading and pouring it through the general mind in ten thousand channels.

Here let me remark, that the fitness of well-governed colleges and higher seminaries of learning to promote this most important end, is the strong and unanswerable republican argument for their foundation and patronage in a free state. They are incorporated and endowed, not for the sake of the comparatively very few who can be taught there, but in the design and hope, that those few may be the instruments of good, and the means of instruction to many, either by example or by actual teaching, writing, or speaking; thus making the most

finished education, if not in itself yet in its effects, uses and consequences, as broad and general as the light of heaven. Should that intent prove abortive, should these institutions minister only to learned pride, conduced nothing to the common good or the elevation and illumination of the public mind—if they become mere reservoirs of stagnant learning, instead of fresh springing fountains of living knowledge, they will disappoint the hopes of their truest friends, and are no longer worthy the countenance and aid of a free people.

But whilst the scholar is thus discharging these honourable and pleasing duties, and diffusing the benefits of science over the whole land, until they reach at length, even the far distant dwellers in the wilderness, let him not neglect the wholesome influence which that science may be made to exert upon his own understanding and heart. The difficulties, doubts, and obscurities that hang over, surround, and bound in, his most distinct and interesting knowledge, will, if soberly considered, repress the pride of false learning, and convince him of his need of a clearer and brighter light than mere human reason can ever offer. It is much to be taught our own ignorance, and thus to be rescued from overweening self-confidence, and self-admiration. Such an ignorance is at once the solid foundation, and the graceful ornament of real learning. But the scholar, if he will but receive the lesson, may here learn also, not to be deluded by the false shows of life, but, on the contrary, to look with indifference upon the meaner objects of human pursuit, and to affect better things. The broader his range of knowledge, the more extensive and accurate his acquaintance with the order, the beauty, and the harmony of nature, so much the more insignificant should the temptations of life and its troubles, its false glories, and its fleeting vexations appear in his eyes. The grandeur of creation places before him a scale wherewith he can measure the littleness of men, and their works, and their desires. When he has attained to look steadily upon the dazzling majesty of truth, he will be enabled to behold wealth, honour, fame, and all the other objects of human pride, not as they

seem, but as they are in themselves. Though they may show like the gorgeous pageant of the summer sunset clouds, piled in golden magnificence mountains high, glowing as with unborrowed light, and seeming as vast and solid as the rocky Alps, he may learn to gaze upon them all with an undazzled eye, well knowing how suddenly they may be scattered by the winds of heaven, or at the most, how soon they will fade away into mist and dark vapours. Such are some of the moral lessons which true philosophy can teach, but which her pupils will seldom learn.

The studies which have scientific truth for their object have, when rightly employed, yet another proper and excellent tendency. It is, that they train the mind to the habit of lifting itself above temporary and accidental circumstances, to the consideration of leading principles. The mind that has long been accustomed to the attentive and exact investigation of mathematical or moral certainty, is not only enriched by the stock of primal truths thus acquired, but is rendered desirous and capable of applying the same or some similar strict analysis, and so attaining an equally satisfactory certainty, in all its other opinions. It cannot easily content itself in any of the important concerns of life, with blindly following the guidance of early prejudice, of transient impulses, of habit, of caprice, of some fascinating example, of popular opinion, of the fashion of some little circle, or of the authority of some great name. In all things it longs and yearns, as it were, to know the reasons of its faith and professions. This appetite for solid knowledge grows with its own indulgence, and thus the intellectual habits of the study may pass with undiminished strength, and it may be with increased usefulness, into the ordinary government of the understanding and the whole conduct of life. Thus it is, that the discipline and accomplishments of scientific study may aid in giving to the character and conduct that unity and consistency which can spring from principle alone. I do not mean that consistency that plumes itself upon a blind devotion to a sect, a party, a leader, to a string of phrases, a form of words, or an

empty name. This is but the idolatry of the mind, the slavery of the understanding. Under the cover of consistency it is often but the pretext or the cause of the most flagrant contradictions.

Still less do I honour that consistency which is but an obstinate adherence to any notions or associations once accidentally formed or professed; for this is to deny ourselves for ever the capacity of becoming better or wiser than we once were. I speak of a consistency admitting of many honest changes of opinion, though of no interested ones. I speak of that consistency of motive and character that is to be found in him—and in him only—who walks through life in singleness of purpose and openness of heart, seeking the right and the truth for himself and the means of happiness for others. It springs from the union of reason with sentiment. Kind dispositions, warm and generous feelings alone cannot give it. These may frequently prompt to right action; they may make error pardonable, and sometimes lovely; but uncertain as they are, fluctuating, unstable, liable to be deluded by sympathy, to be hurried into passion, and when their intention is the best, then often, ignorantly to cause the greatest harm, unless they are guided by enlightened Principles, they can never be durably useful or honourably consistent. Alike in the social and domestic relations and in the great concerns of a nation's policy, the principles of right and the rules of public and private utility pointed out by wise experience, are the only sure guides to happiness. Like the bright stars of the pole or the steady-pointing needle, they enable the well-informed patriot to hold his undeviating course across the trackless ocean of life, defying its currents and its blasts, where he would otherwise wander, the sport of every gale, or at best creep timidly along the coasts and narrow bays following all their windings. Truth—as Bacon taught in his quaint and figurative wisdom—Truth and Goodness are one, differing but as the seal from the print. Therefore it is, that the possession of valuable and well-arranged knowledge of any sort, and still more that mental training thus gained, have their most natural and best

operation in leading us to establish firmly in ourselves those principles and practical opinions that may be the guides of intelligent action. Wherever wise and consistent conduct appears, there is good evidence that wise and pure principles, to some extent at least, have been firmly fixed. These may be traced in minds very little illuminated by human learning; but they should be "mightiest in the mighty." The power and the evidence of well-settled and lofty principles, should appear most manifest in those, whose youth has been trained to weigh the force of argument and to trace the laws of the Creator's wisdom. Their minds, elevated as they have been to noble subjects of meditation, should be habitually raised to the contemplation of the good and the fair—enlarged as they have been by various information, they should be fertile of those things that bring freedom and peace to man.

Should be! Ought to be! And is it not always so? Alas, how often is it the reverse!

How seldom have the wise wisdom enough to know how to use their wisdom aright! Scenes of bounty and justice, bright views of faith and honour, of generous motives and adventurous undertakings crowned with merited success, all lie spread before them as in some delicious landscape; but the toys and trifles of selfish aggrandizement or grovelling desire are immediately before their eyes, engrossing their whole attention and quite shutting out the diversified and magnificent prospect. The talent of such men may have been invigorated by education, but being never given to the defence or the service of their country or their neighbour, it is like that acquired by the training of the boxer to be wasted in idle contests for paltry rewards.

Foolish and unfortunate men. They know not what they lose. In thus applying to selfish aims and with selfish motives that which was given for the use of society, they narrow their own capacities to the scale of their objects of pursuit. The eye of the judgment adapts itself to the minute trifles on which it is habitually employed, and becomes feeble and dim-sighted to larger and distant

objects. The intellect, whatever skill and adroitness it may acquire in its way, is dwarfed down to trickish schemes, sorry arts, and petty intrigues. Thus do they lower themselves in the rank of intellectual beings. They shut themselves out from the best delights of rational existence. The serene but exquisite pleasures of a firm sense of duty, of a conscientious support of right, of an enlightened and disinterested benevolence, have for them no reality. Their talents and their acquirements are to them but a vile merchandize, wherewith they carry on a huckstering traffic for poor gains. They may heap up riches ; they may build themselves a name ; they may climb, or may crawl, to the high places of power. Still to them society is stript of its beauty, its glories, and its best excitements. Life is to them barren, and cheerless, and wearisome. The rewards and the consolations of the truly wise, they can never have. Blessings spring not up in their paths, nor do Friendship and Affection, Gratitude and Honour, crowd around them as the glad companions of their way.

To borrow the happy image of a German poet ;

—Life has charms

Which *they* have ne'er experienced ; they have been
 But voyaging along its barren coasts,
 Like some poor ever-roaming horde of pirates,
 That crowded in the rank and narrow ship
 House on the wild wave with wild usages,
 Nor know aught of the main land, but the bays,
 Where safest they may venture a thieves' landing.
 Whate'er in the inland dales the land conceals
 Of fair and exquisite, O ! nothing, nothing,
 Do *they* behold of that in their rude voyage.*

Closely connected with attachment to Principle, as well as with zeal for the diffusion of truth, is that mild toleration for difference of sentiment which permits a liberal and unaffected respect for the motives and characters of honourable men whose doctrines or opinions are at furthest variance from our own. It is a beautiful and natu-

* Schiller. *The Piccolomini*.—Coleridge's Trans.

ral consequence of honest and laborious inquiries after truth, to impress the mind at once with a conviction of its exceeding value, and of the difficulties that encompass it; thus at the same time giving us confidence in our own conclusions, and charity for those of others. *Qui posca considerat de facili pronunciat*, was a wise maxim of our ancestors. It is a little thinking and not enough, that makes men conclude hastily and denounce boldly. Those who in calm and pleasing solitariness, have been filled with cheerful and confident thoughts, whilst, like Milton, they " beheld the bright countenance of Truth, in the quiet air of delightful studies;" are but rarely the foremost to embark, of their own accord, " on the troubled sea of noisy and hoarse disputes." When duty calls them thither, they obey. But though mixing in the warfare, they are in it, but not of it, and they war for what they deem the right, in the spirit of peace.

He who has traced out to his own satisfaction the grounds and reasons of his belief in morals, politics, or religion, has done most wisely. Yet he has but half profited by his studies, if he has not also learnt something of humility and caution in judging, and something of forbearance and charity for those who think not as he does. In convincing himself he might also learn how many impediments there are in the way of knowing the whole and precise truth—how much of pardonable mistake, how much of praiseworthy sincerity there may be in error; how prejudices pre-occupy and fill up the mind; how possible it is that they may have some hold upon his own. Thus also he can learn how strong and tenacious is the influence of names and words, even to the sometimes arraying in hostile ranks, men who act from the same motives, who look to the same ends, and who, if they could be brought to understand each other would agree in the same language, professions, and principles.

Above all, it is in the school of general truth that we can best learn, that which seems theoretically to be the simplest and easiest of all rules of judgment, and is yet the one proved by constant experience to be the most rarely followed. I mean that of giving their due proportions of

importance to doctrines, or opinions, or parties, and no more. For it is the frequent error of all of us, to feel most warmly, and to rush with the most intense ardour into controversy upon those shadowy differences that divide men, who think alike on all weightier matters.

In our own country the right of uncontrolled liberty of thought and discussion on every subject has been recognized and established on the broadest scale, so far as laws and constitutions, together with the settled theoretical opinion of the whole nation, can do so. But this legal liberty, combined with the incessant activity of a young and ardent nation, where all power of all kinds is in the hands of the people, leads of course to greater variety of collisions between the opinions and interests of individuals, thus splitting up society the more readily into sects and parties, religious, political, local, or social. It is impossible to prevent such collisions and separations; nor, taking human nature as we find it, is it desirable, in my judgment, were it possible. By such contests truth is elicited and liberty preserved. Yet in the most perfect freedom from all legal restraints there may be, and there occasionally is, a species of moral and social tyranny scarcely less oppressive than the heavy hand of legal severity. There may be a virulence of civil dissension inflaming and maddening society until the best privileges of freemen seem dearly purchased at the expense of social and domestic peace. There are seasons when a proscriptive, a denunciatory spirit lords it over the passions of multitudes, and fills them with an embittered frenzy. Then it is that society has most need of the service of those of her sons whose disciplined understanding and conscientious investigation have given them such a calm and firm attachment to their principles as neither requires nor allows the aid of the artificial stimulants furnished by factious rage or bigotted intolerance. Character and acquirement enable them to speak to their fellows in the decided though gentle tone of rational authority. At first the voice of reason is drowned amidst the shouts and clamours of an excited multitude. At length it rises above the dissonant noises and makes itself heard. That

evil spirit who had lorded it unrestrained in the tumult of passion, hears its awful bidding and is rebuked. He trembles and cowers and flits away to his native darkness. Those who had moved as one man at his impulse, now stand like recovered maniacs wondering at their own late delusion. Their fevered delirium is calmed and their angry fury is lulled to sleep amid the music of kind recollections and better sympathies.

I have now imperfectly presented to you, some few of the more prominent and important of the topics suggested by a theme pregnant with interest and instruction. I have endeavoured to show to you some of the natural and benign tendencies of well-directed study, in the hope of thus impressing upon you the weighty duty of using the precious gifts of education according to their best purposes and right intention. My views and arguments have of necessity been very general. I have but drawn with a hurried hand the rough outline of a full and various subject. How the details should be filled up, and these principles applied to the concerns of men, I must leave to your own meditations. I trust, too, that I may confidently leave them to be practically exemplified in your own future lives, so that whether they be employed in enterprize or arts, in commerce, or agriculture, or science, in the courts of justice, the halls of legislation, or at the altars of the Most High, they will equally give evidence that Knowledge is not only Power, but that it both ought to be and may be Virtue.

As scholars you cannot but well remember the animated exhortation to the love of glory which Homer puts in the mouth of Sarpedon, one of his favourite heroes.* The Lycian king reminds his friend and brother chief of the wealth, the honours, and the luxuries their country had lavished upon them, of their royal banquets, of the public homage that waited upon their steps, of their fertile domain upon the banks of the winding Xanthus crowned with the vine, the olive, and the golden harvest. "Why, Glaucus," says the magnanimous warrior, "why

* Iliad. L. xii.

should all this be ours, unless we can prove our desert by our acts, and leading the very van of battle, grace the dignity we hold by deeds of valour?"

In like manner I have aimed to stir up your minds with the sense of the glories belonging to that princely scientific inheritance which you may claim as your own. I have painted, or rather, I have faintly sketched out, the fertile beauties of that fair literary domain, whereof, as citizens of the commonwealth of letters, you are the equal lords. I have recalled to your recollection the memory of the great men, who, during a long train of ages, have accumulated and transmitted to you this more than regal heritage, through a line far more illustrious than any ancestry ever blazoned by heraldry. In doing this, it was not my design to inflate your vanity with pompous and empty words. I wish by these considerations to excite you to nobler deeds than those of the warrior, to the labours of benevolence, to the exploits of peace, to the bloodless victories of virtue and reason. I have reminded you that the treasures of science and letters are but the accumulated labours of past centuries. If you therefore feel yourselves to be debtors to the Past in an incalculable amount, I would have that reflection stimulate you to the desire of paying some part of that debt by service to the Present or the Future. Others have lived and toiled for us. It is for us to live and labour for others.

I have called upon you to gaze for a time upon those distant summits of abstract science, towering above the fogs and clouds of this low earth, and lighted by the perpetual beams of eternal reason. Thither I have pointed your view, not that the mind can there make its ordinary residence, or find its constant occupation; but because such contemplations, rightly used, have power to lift the soul above little cares and base desires, above the narrowness of intolerance and the meanness of ambition.

Unless thus exalted and ennobled, what are the most splendid talents, the most brilliant accomplishments, the most varied acquirements, that nature or education can bestow?

To the mind's eye, freed from its native film and made

to see things as the truly are, these all appear but as the sparkling, foaming, heaving billows of Niagara's Rapids, whirled along in fierce agitation and terrible velocity, until they sweep over the dark precipice, leaving no trace behind them.

Other, quite other, my young friends,—I fervently hope, will be the direction and destiny of your talents, and unlike to these the currents of your future lives.

May they flow along in streams of peaceful beneficence, fed from limpid springs of living waters, gushing from high sources, some of them winding their quiet way through the green pastures and shaded vales of domestic life, and some, like our own majestic Hudson, rolling along the full, steady, unbroken tide of public usefulness in the broad eye of day; but all refreshing and gladdening the land, and clothing it with fruitfulness, and beauty, and joy.

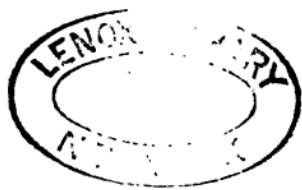
AN
INTRODUCTORY LECTURE
ON THE
CHARACTER AND DUTIES
OF
A PHYSICIAN.

BY JOHN WARE, M. D.

ADJUNCT PROFESSOR OF THE THEORY AND PRACTICE OF MEDICINE
IN HARVARD UNIVERSITY.

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J. N. E.



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LECTURE.*

WE are met, this morning, Gentlemen, for the purpose of beginning a course of instruction in the elements of medical science. Of those whom I address, many, no doubt, have already made considerable progress in their professional studies; some approach the period of their termination; whilst some, on the other hand, have but just entered upon them. But whatever be the time at which you severally expect to commence the active duties of life, whether it be near or remote, the minds of all of you are probably directed towards it, as an important era, with mingled hope and fear. Your immediate object at present should of course be to qualify yourselves for the station you are to hold in society, by the acquisition of a competent amount of professional knowledge; but there are many other considerations relating to the office of a physician, which should sometimes also engage your attention.

No man ought to meet with great success in the practice of medicine, no man ought to get an extensive business, unless he be actually well informed,—unless he deserve it. And few, I believe, do reach to a truly desirable kind or height of reputation without being well educated; but many who are well educated, fail in attaining

* Delivered before the Medical Class in Harvard University.

to such a reputation, and find themselves, through life, far behind many contemporaries, who have not half their talents or medical knowledge. No man perhaps succeeds greatly without deserving it ; but many, who deserve it, do not succeed. Now, what is the reason of this ? It is at once obvious, if this statement be true, that to success as a practitioner something beside mere professional merit is necessary. A physician must have other accomplishments than those which are strictly professional. His relation to society is something more than that of a mere investigator of the character of disease and a dispenser of the means of curing it. He must be able to do this and do it well ; but he must also be able to do something more ; he must have other qualifications.

It is true, you have no immediate use for the qualifications of which I speak. Having no direct personal connection with patients, you cannot exercise the accomplishments to which I refer. It is nevertheless necessary, in order that you should acquit yourselves to your satisfaction when the time comes, that you should early form just ideas of the nature of your profession, its connection with society, the duties which its calls on you to perform, the light in which you will be regarded when you practise it, and the character and deportment which will become you in the performance of its offices. It is only by entertaining proper views on all these points, that you will be aware of what will be expected of you on the one hand, and of what you ought to be ready to perform on the other.

I do not intend to enter into a detailed statement on this subject. A volume might easily be written upon it, and I regret that there is no such volume in existence. But you will excuse me, I do not doubt, if I devote the time, allotted to us this morning, to some general remarks on the character and relations of the medical profession, which will perhaps serve the purpose of directing your attention to the subject, and furnish you with materials, that will enable you to form for yourselves just views of the course of conduct it will become you hereafter to pursue.

There is little in the reputation of the physician which would be desirable to a man of ordinary ambition. It is not a profession suited to one who loves display,—who would live in the mouths of his fellow-men,—who would enjoy a widely extended name and influence. The physician is but little known beyond his actual sphere of practice, and this must be, from the nature of the case, extremely narrow. However he may be esteemed and even venerated in the community in which he resides, his worth can rarely be made known beyond it. No man's services are more valued in private life, no man is more important to families and individuals as such ; but he forms no part in the public apparatus of the community,—all its machinery goes on as well without him as with him. His duties are performed to individuals, and not to bodies of men. He is obliged by a sort of physical necessity to revolve in one single circle, and that of very small extent.

This is true not only of physicians in general, but of some of those who have distinguished themselves as philosophers and reformers in the profession. It is true, in great measure, of those who have displayed talents and exercised an influence, which in any other department of science or any other walk of life, would have made their reputation coextensive with the civilized world. In point of fact, how little is known, except by medical men themselves, of the great lights of our profession, either of this or of former ages. Compare the fame of Harvey, for instance, with that of Newton. I would not put the discoveries of the former on a level with those of the latter, either in respect to their intrinsic importance, or to the qualities of mind indicated in the individuals who made them. Yet there are some points of resemblance in their labours, which afford a reason for ranking them, as discoverers in science, in the same class. The discovery of the circulation of the blood by Harvey was not less fundamental, or essential to a right understanding of the science of life, than that of gravitation by Newton was to the right understanding of all physical science. In the two great divisions of the creation, animate matter and

inanimate matter, they were the discoverers of the principles or laws, with which all subsequent advances in knowledge have been connected, and on which they have been in some measure dependent.

Yet how different is the reputation they have enjoyed, not only in kind, which was perhaps to be expected, but in degree and extent. Who hears the name of Harvey uttered beyond the limits of our profession? Who knows any thing of his life or labours? How little do men estimate the value of his discovery, or the influence it has had on a science, to which they are notwithstanding daily looking for aid and comfort? Who does not hear the name of Newton? It is equally in the mouth of the philosopher and of the school-boy. It is associated in every man's mind, throughout the civilized world, with the laws of the universe which he inhabits.

Compare Bichat with Davy. They were men strongly resembling each other in genius, in an early development of talent, and in the commanding influence they exercised over the sciences to which they were respectively devoted. Each too arrived in early youth at an eminence in his separate sphere of exertion, which is with most men the reward of many years of unwearied toil. But how different the rank which they hold with the world at large! The anatomist, the physiologist, looks up to Bichat with an admiration approaching that which the chemist feels in regard to Davy. But ask the man of letters, the man of the world, the politician, the lawyer, what he knows of the two philosophers, and you will find a striking and truly mortifying difference.

To take a still stronger example; suppose that the great founder of modern surgery, John Hunter, had been a lawyer or a statesman, and had applied to his pursuits the profound sagacity and unequalled industry which he bestowed on anatomy and physiology; he would have acquired a reputation equal to that of any individual of the age in which he lived. We should have heard of him in the same breath with Mansfield, Burke, and Johnson. But what does the world know of him now, or what did his contemporaries know of him then? Little more than

that he was a very respectable surgeon, which, in comparison with the actual character and desert of the individual, is much as if one were to say of Lord Mansfield, that he was a respectable barrister.

Not that the world is disposed to deny the praise of greatness to men eminent in our profession. The truth is, that their claims are not, and cannot be, fairly brought before it. It does not understand the measure by which their qualifications are to be estimated. Few, except physicians themselves, are capable of appreciating the merits of a medical man; and, more than this, his talents are exerted in a field so remote from common observation, that the materials for a judgment are not readily afforded even to those capable of judging. This is no ground of complaint. It is no injustice. We perceive no disposition to rob members of our profession of their due share of fame, whether contemporary or posthumous. We state merely the fact, that they do not attain to that reputation, which the same talents, industry, and success would have ensured to them in other walks of life. This fact grows out of the nature of their duties, and of their relation to society.

But there is some compensation for this in the nature of the estimation which they enjoy in the sphere in which they do move. No confidence is so implicit as that which is reposed in a physician of good character, by the community to which he belongs. His character and connection with society are such, as to invite an undoubting reliance upon him, not only in his particular vocation, but in all circumstances which require fidelity and intelligence. The authority acquired by some physicians over the minds of their patients has been very great. The affection with which they are sometimes regarded is not less remarkable. No man probably has a strong hold on the affections of so many individuals, as an amiable and skilful physician; there is none, not even the minister of religion, whose connection with families is so intimate and so domestic, and none whose loss is more deeply felt.

This sort of reputation, this interest in the feelings of

mankind, we must take, I say, as a compensation for the absence of those means of rendering ourselves known to the world, which are possessed by men of other occupations. We cannot, like the preacher, the lawyer, the legislator, acquire reputation coextensive with our country or the world ; but we may secure, by a diligent performance of our humbler but not less useful duties, an interest in the hearts of a narrow circle, which may be far more gratifying than the cold applauses of a nation.

This strong interest, with which physicians of proper character are regarded, grows out of the peculiar nature of the connection that exists between them and their patients. Our attention is not often directed to this point, and probably neither physicians nor patients are generally aware of the exact nature of the relation subsisting between them, although they may strictly perform all the duties which grow out of it. They are unconscious of the precise character, or at least of the whole character, of the services which they are receiving and rendering. Thus, if any man be asked, why he confides in and has an affection for his physician, he readily answers you, that it is because he believes him to be skilful in his profession, and has been faithfully attended by him in sickness. But this, I apprehend, is not the only, if it be indeed the principal source of that reliance on physicians, which is felt by those who are labouring under disease, or the friends by whom they are surrounded. What other source, then, does exist ?

Every one who has experienced it, knows very well, and others hardly can know, how distracting is that anxiety which we undergo during the dangerous sickness of ourselves or our friends ; how much it prostrates our self-control and self-reliance ; how it fills the mind with doubt ; what terrible suspense consumes our days, and what images of horror visit our sleeping hours. It is from this state of mind that mankind seek and find at least temporary relief, in the presence and counsel of the physician. They need some one on whom they may lean, some one upon whom they can throw the feeling of responsibility, from whom they may expect an opinion

which shall either destroy their hopes or banish their fears, and thus at any rate diminish that greatest of trials to the mind, suspense. In all seasons of danger and dismay, we derive inexpressible, and perhaps unaccountable, satisfaction from the simple presence of an individual who is known to understand and appreciate the nature of the evils which threaten us, even should we know that the danger itself is in no degree lessened by his presence or his counsel. This is peculiarly the case in sickness. No danger so unsettles the self-command of even the firmest minds, because there is none of which the nature and degree are so little understood. In proportion to the uncertainty and suspense which exists, will be the relief afforded by the calm, steady, and unruffled deportment, which it is the part of the physician to display under circumstances the most embarrassing and uncertain. If the danger itself be not diminished, the apprehension of it, the suffering of fear, is greatly taken away. So astonishing is sometimes this influence on the feelings of friends and of the sick, that their first impression seems to be, that the danger itself has vanished. This is observable even in cases where the presence of the medical adviser only serves to confirm the worst fears, and to extinguish the last hope. How often is it said to us on such occasions,—“ We are thankful to know the worst ; we know that you can do nothing ; but when you are here, we feel safe.” So preferable is certainty to suspense ; so much better can we bear to know that nothing can be done, than to be in doubt what should be done.

The service which a physician renders in this way is not, indeed, independent of, but wholly in addition to, that which consists in the administration of the resources of the healing art. It is a moral influence derived from and founded upon a general confidence in his knowledge and skill, but not at all connected with the belief, in each particular case, that his skill will be of any avail. His presence and support are not less sought for, and are not less efficacious in soothing the anxieties of patients and their friends, in cases necessarily mortal, than in those which are simply dangerous. The comfort of a decided

state of mind and of a freedom from responsibility is what the friends of the sick crave. They yearn for some strong arm on which to rest the harassed mind. Hence the so common desire, particularly among those of little firmness, that we should fly to our patients even when the hand of death is upon them,—not that we may minister to their sufferings, but that our presence may serve as a stay and support to their friends.

I do not know that I have been successful in exactly defining the nature of the services which are thus rendered by physicians; but many, I presume, may find a confirmation of my remarks and an illustration of them, if they will analyse the state of their own minds in times of danger and anxiety. They may perceive, that there is a relation between the physician and his patients distinct from that which consists in the administration of the resources of art, though ultimately growing out of a belief in his knowledge and skill in that respect,—a relation contributing not a little to the comfort and satisfaction of the sick and their friends, and well worthy to be borne in mind and understood by those who are entering on the study of medicine.

Some men have doubted, whether the art of medicine be capable of doing any thing toward the cure of diseases directly; whether it be in our power by medicinal applications, to control in any measure those processes of the system in which disease consists. This is the excess of scepticism in medicine. But there is really some ground for the suspicion, that, taking the practitioners of medicine in a mass,—the skilful with the unskilful, the educated with the ignorant, the prudent with the rash, the wise with the stupid,—nature would do as much for the cure of diseases as art does. But even admitting that medicine were of no efficacy in the way commonly supposed, still, with the present belief and feelings of mankind on the subject, the profession would be of incalculable value, as a benevolent institution for alleviating the anxieties and assuming the responsibility of sickness. And yet further, were there no such faith among mankind as now exists concerning the powers of the healing

art,—still, if there were a class of men who made the history of the human body and its diseases their study, and who were able, in consequence, to give correct opinions concerning the nature, the danger, and the probable course and result of a disease, I believe that their presence and their opinion would be sought with eagerness, and would essentially contribute to the alleviation of human suffering.

It would seem, then, that the profession of the physician is made necessary by the refined moral feelings of mankind, as well as by the desire of relief from pain and the removal of disease. In accordance with this remark, it is to be observed, that the demand for medical attendance, and more especially for peculiar moral qualities in those from whom it is sought, increases with the increasing civilization and refinement of society ; still further, that it is much greater in the higher and more refined classes of a community, at the same time, than it is in the lower.

It is from the character of this relation, in part at least, that confidence in physicians is of so slow and gradual growth. No doubt the well-founded opinion, that experience is essential to excellence, contributes much to the same effect ; but independently of this, long personal intercourse is necessary to give patients that entire and undoubting reliance, which is so often felt by them. It is frequently regarded by us, when young in practice, as a hardship, that confidence is yielded to us so slowly and reluctantly ;—that we are obliged to wind our way so gradually into public esteem, and consequently too often to pass the flower of our days, either without employment, or in employment which scarcely yields to us any thing but the hope of something better. But I am not sure that this is so great an evil as it appears. Confidence which is easily gained, is easily lost. It is confidence reposed in his elders, which makes it, for the young man, a thing so difficult to attain. The same cause will continue to him hereafter that which he has once acquired. Could he easily supplant his seniors in public esteem when young, what assurance has he that he will not be himself supplanted when he is old ?

The truth is, that physicians acquire that confidence of which I have spoken, only by growing up with a generation. It is rarely felt by patients towards one whom they have newly adopted, or transiently employed. It is constantly remarked by those who have from early life been conversant with one physician and have afterwards lost him, that no one is found to make his place good. The art of making one's way in the world, of passing for more than one is worth, of dazzling the sober sense of mankind by a glare of false pretension, will sometimes acquire for a physician a degree of notoriety, but seldom a permanent reputation. Even rare qualifications of nature and education, except under circumstances uncommonly favourable, make but gradual progress. It was remarked by Dr. Baillie, that he had never known a physician, who, from any cause, acquired business rapidly in the city of London, and who retained it ; and this corresponds well with the remark we have here made. If it be rapidly acquired, this must be accomplished by means independent of those which give a firm hold on the confidence and affections of patients ; for they cannot at once be displayed, nor can they at once have their full operation.

There are many advantages in this gradual growth of reputation, accompanied no doubt by some disadvantages. It makes the profession progressive during the active part of life ; it affords a constant motive for activity ; it stimulates us to continue our exertions to deserve, in order that we may attain to an increase of reputation and emolument. It is apt to be destructive to a man's improvement, to have arrived early in life at eminence in his profession,—to have enjoyed in youth the regard and confidence which are usually the privilege of riper years only. Ambition is cloyed ; the love of distinction is sated ; and the desire of improvement is deadened. It is a most difficult task to keep possession of an eminence thus gained ; whilst, at the same time, the motive to the requisite exertion is feeble and constantly diminishing. Hence premature reputation, even with a competent share of merit, is seldom permanent. But

where public confidence is slowly yielded and yielded only on the assurance of sufficient desert, the motive to improvement is constantly operative ; and, as a necessary consequence, the satisfaction arising from this source is always new and never exhausted.

This leads me to make some remarks on the principles, which should guide us in the means we employ for the acquisition of business. I have already observed, that the success of men is not always in proportion to their professional merit, but that other circumstances contribute to it. A physician's first object should of course be to qualify himself for the treatment of disease ; but, whilst he does not fail in this, it is right for him to cultivate such other qualifications as shall promote the final object of his entrance on the profession.

The measures, to which men have had recourse to get medical business, have so often been mean and dishonourable, as to have become almost proverbial. A celebrated physician, noted for his coarseness, brutality and profaneness, once remarked to a beginner in practice, that there were two ways of getting into business ; one by bullying, and the other by cajoling, mankind. "I," said he, "have succeeded very well with the first, and you may perhaps do well to try the second." Gentlemen, if I believed that there were no way of rising to notice in our profession, but by the adoption of the mean arts and paltry tricks which are implied in this advice, I would at once advise you to turn your backs upon it, as a calling unworthy of an honourable man. But I know that this is far, very far, from being true. There are means of gaining the confidence of mankind which we can exercise without degrading ourselves ; and we may always be assured, that, if we maintain a course and character by which we forfeit our self-respect, we shall sooner or later lose that of our fellow-men.

I do not here speak of the sudden acquisition of business : this, where there is any competition, can only be the result of art or accident ; but of that honourable and substantial reputation, which alone is worth having. In what I have already said, I have alluded to some of the

principal circumstances which will ensure it. But I may remark in addition on a few points which should distinguish the character of the physician.

He should show that his profession is the great object of his life, and consequently of his thoughts ;—and it should be so. Yet I would not have him withdraw his attention from all other studies, nor all other pursuits. This would be to narrow his mind, and to render him less intelligent even in his own department. Neither would I have him needlessly intrude his knowledge of medicine or his devotion to it, at all times, on those in whose society he is placed. He should embrace every reasonable opportunity of making known his attainments ; but let him avoid that boasting and conceited style of conversation with regard to himself, which, however it may for a time impose on the credulous and the weak, does in the end lessen a man in the esteem of others, as it ought to do in his own.

The physician should be devoted to the welfare of his patients, and his manner should be such that they may feel that he is so. One man may really be willing to do as much for the sick as another, he may feel the same interest in the case, he may give it the same attention, and succeed as well in its treatment ;—yet he may appear to the patient cold, heartless, and indifferent. Now I would not recommend the expression of any mawkish sensibility at the bed-side of the sick ; neither is the physician called to the direct utterance of any words of sympathy with the sufferings of those whom he attends. But he is bound to the exercise of a uniform kindness, gentleness, and tenderness of manner, from which nothing should induce him to deviate. And if I were to name any one thing more than another, which within my own observation has contributed to the success of physicians, it would be such a manner and management in the sick room as indicate regard for the welfare of their patients, consideration for their feelings, and sympathy with their sufferings, accompanied by an earnest attention to the nature of their disease.

It is unquestionably often a hard task to maintain such

a deportment towards the sick and towards their friends. We are often exposed to causes of great irritation. We are annoyed by unreasonable expectations and strange perverseness on the part of patients, and tormented by the unsatisfiable inquisitiveness of their friends. Then we are forced to maintain a firm and tranquil demeanour when we are tortured with anxiety ; to seem decided and confident in order that we may impart confidence, when we are distracted by doubt and uncertainty ; and to appear cheerful, when we are depressed by witnessing suffering and distress, and the defeat of our best endeavours for their relief.

We are apt to complain of the unreasonableness of patients and their friends, and we perhaps suffer ourselves too often to be betrayed into expressions of irritation and disgust at what appears to be an ungrateful and unfounded want of confidence on their part, though it really is not meant as such. We are not always so considerate in these cases as the circumstances demand. We do not make allowance enough for the effects produced by sickness on the mind ; for the irritability and feebleness which are its consequence ; for the impatience often manifested at delays and discomforts, which seem but trifling to us, who do not endure them, and who know that a little time will remove them ; but which appear serious evils to those who suffer them, and who do not know but they may portend some serious disaster. Neither do we always consider, that ignorance, more than wilfulness or malice, leads to those officious interferences, which so often perplex and harass us, and that the rule of morality, as well as of sound policy, should prompt us to forbear any expression of the annoyance which we may feel.

But it is useless to go through with all the details which present themselves on this subject. I can recommend but one general rule, which is of universal application, and by the faithful observance of which, one cannot fail to attain that species of address in his intercourse with patients, which will ensure him their confidence and affection. Let him really feel an interest in their wel-

fare, as well as assiduously endeavour to understand and treat their diseases ; let him check in himself all impatience and irritation at unreasonableness or ingratitude on their part ; let him always cultivate, as a duty, kind and charitable feelings towards them ; and there is no fear but that he will manifest this state of mind in his conduct.

These are the most important moral qualities which the physician must exhibit in his character, considered in the point of view in which we are now looking at the profession. But there is another, which, though perhaps less absolutely necessary to success, is of great importance ; I mean that usually known by the phrase *decision of character*. I know that many regard this as a quality inherent by nature in some, and denied to others ; and undoubtedly men differ in the degree in which they possess it. Some are originally fickle, vacillating, and undecided ; others are self-confident and firm in opinion and action. But I believe that the sort of character necessary to gain confidence, in the physician, may be obtained by any man of tolerable sense, who can fully comprehend what it is, and will constantly act with reference to its acquisition. It consists in calmly making up his mind on every occasion from the best lights which he can bring to bear upon the case,—making up his mind distinctly as to the course which it is proper to pursue, and then steadily and undeviatingly pursuing that course, without shifting it from day to day to gratify any transient whim of the patient, or in consequence of some trifling change of symptoms. Not that one should obstinately persevere in any course, when circumstances decidedly show it to be a wrong one ;—the proper character is shown by not making up one's opinion in the first instance without strong reasons and sufficient consideration,—and in not acting afterward without the same. I am ready to say, that, in most instances, it were better to persevere in a plan of treatment which is not the very best the case admits, than lightly to change it from day to day with the chance of sometimes hitting upon a better and sometimes on a worse.

Our art is so imperfect, and so much conjecture interferes with correct judgment in disease, that the mind of the physician must necessarily be left in many cases,—may, in a majority,—in a state of uncertainty with respect to the character of the disease he is to treat, and the best course to be pursued in its management. Now, as something must be done, and he is to act according to the best judgment he is able to form, the uncertainty which he feels should never appear in his language or manner. He may feel, for instance, in some hazardous case, that a powerful remedy is on the whole advisable, yet that there is some question whether it may not in the end retard recovery, protract the disease by exhausting the strength, or turn the scale against the patient's life by interfering with a salutary natural process, which would carry him through if left to itself. All this may pass through his mind, and require to be weighed before he comes to a decision. But when it has been weighed and the decision made, none of the doubts which hang over the matter should be suffered to appear to the patient. He cannot say to him,—“ I am going to bleed you, but after all, the effect of the remedy cannot be foreseen; it may give you temporary relief, it is true, and thus appear to you to be beneficial, but in the end it may be prejudicial, and perhaps cost you your life.” It is very clear, that to hold such language could never be advantageous either to the physician or the patient. No; whatever we decide to do, we must do as if it were the very best thing that can be done, and as if we had no misgivings about it. There is no deception in this. It is the principle on which we act in all the concerns of life.

I am desirous, when speaking of decision of character, to warn you against an error into which physicians sometimes, and the public very often fall. When they speak of decided practice, they commonly refer to the employment of powerful remedies; and a decided practitioner in their eyes is one who is bold and daring, who would carry the system by storm, and drive disease out of it by main force. But this is a wrong use of the term, and one may be misled by it into dangerous habits of action. A decided practitioner is one, who does that which the case

seems to him to require, steadily and undeviatingly, whether it be much or little. As much decision may be shown,—nay, I think, much more,—in doing nothing, than in doing a great deal. Patients and their friends are seldom uneasy, when they see a great many means put in requisition for their relief; but it requires a rare combination of intelligence and moral force to keep them quiet, and to keep one's self also composed, when, amidst danger and pain and perhaps the fear of death, we feel ourselves called upon to adopt only palliative or negative means.

There is one other consideration relating to the formation of the medical character, to which also I wish to call your attention. At the present day, a new and strong impulse has been given to the investigation of medicine as a science. New and more accurate methods of studying the history of diseases have been put in practice. Nothing can be more desirable than that each one, according to his opportunity, should devote himself to this species of study. But there is apt to exist in the mind, when it becomes deeply interested in such pursuits, a tendency to confine the attention to the investigation for its own sake, without sufficient regard to the ultimate purposes for which it has been undertaken. Thus, the botanist becomes engaged in examining and classifying plants, and feels no interest except in studying them as parts of a certain system of arrangement. It is the same with the entomologist and the mineralogist. And so, too, the physician may get engaged in the study of disease solely as a branch of natural history. He may come to look on patients, as the botanist does on his plants or the entomologist on his insects, merely as objects whose characteristics he is to investigate, and not fellow-beings whose diseases he is to cure. There is, I say, a tendency to this, which every man feels more or less when he becomes deeply interested in the study of the history of disease. He almost learns to feel,—indeed he may, unless he guard against it, quite learn to feel,—as if the sufferings, the health, and even the life of the patient were of secondary importance, when compared with the success of his investigations. It surely seems as if some men would

be chagrined by a recovery, which should falsify their prediction as to the result of a case, or deprive them of the means of determining the accuracy of their diagnosis. It is no doubt desirable, that medicine should be thus studied. It is in the power of those who apply themselves to the natural history of diseases strictly, to confer great benefits on the profession by the treasures of knowledge which they accumulate, and which can be only thus accumulated. But though all may make an approach to the same method of observation, yet all cannot do it to the same extent, nor ought any one to do it at the sacrifice of the more pressing duties which belong to his calling. It is well that one should look at diseases, and study them as objects of science ; but the sick must not be treated so as to feel that they are regarded only in this light. He ought never to forget the higher duties which he owes them, as fellow-men labouring under sufferings, which they believe him able to relieve. Nothing will more certainly deprive him of their confidence, and prevent his gaining their affection, than the exhibition of a spirit of this kind. Patients often evince much tact in fathoming the motives by which we are actuated in our treatment of them. And although they would, other things being the same, confide most in him who seemed to study most deeply their case ; yet, did they imagine that the interest was of a purely selfish and scientific kind, suspicion would take the place of confidence, and they would apprehend that they were to be made the subjects of experiment, and not of a rational mode of treatment.

The considerations I have presented, have grown out of the remark made at the outset, that medical success is not uniformly in proportion to medical desert, and that various other circumstances contribute to the progress made by an individual in medicine, considered, as an art, or profession. It might now perhaps be asked, if these circumstances contribute so much to success, why should we devote so much toil and time to the acquisition of medical knowledge, which, after all, is of so little avail. I answer, in the first place, that we have ourselves to satisfy as well as the public ; and this we cannot do without

understanding thoroughly the science which we profess. But, in the next place, I would repeat another remark, that, although many men fail who are, professionally speaking, well qualified, and many acquire practice and notoriety who are but indifferently qualified, yet none arrive at a truly desirable and permanent reputation, who are not well versed in the knowledge of their profession.

The reason of this is, that such a reputation must be conferred on a man by the voice of the members of the profession, who alone are competent judges of the merit of a medical practitioner. It is a fact that the public are no judges of this merit. They know nothing of medicine. It is truly astonishing to find how strangely ignorant of the first principles of medical science, and especially of medical evidence, are a large proportion, I do not know but I may say, are all men out of the profession, even the most intelligent and learned. A celebrated writer on Education has remarked in substance, that all men are competent judges of the character of a physician, because any body can tell whether his patients lived or died. Perhaps a more shallow remark was never made. A physician himself, if he observe with the caution of a philosopher, may pass many years of careful observation without being able to determine with regard to the success of his practice in any one disease or with any one remedy. Nothing is more difficult, than to form such an estimate either concerning ourselves or others. But it were idle to exhibit the absurdity of the remark. When men form their opinion of a physician's character, they derive their materials from two sources. First, they judge of his capacity and attainments in medicine, by their observation of his capacity and attainments in other things. If they find a man exhibiting good sense and sufficient information on subjects with which they are acquainted, and observe him at the same time to be devoted to the business of his calling, they conclude very reasonably that he will employ the same qualities there; and they accordingly give him their confidence, although they are no judges whether he proves deserving of it or not. Secondly, they judge of a physician's character by the standing which he maintains

among his medical brethren. The effect of this is not always obvious, especially at first. But you may depend upon it as true, that few or none will rise to high and permanent reputation as physicians, who do not maintain a good standing with other physicians, and who have not their confidence. A man's permanent reputation must be given to him by the profession. No other is worth having *alone*.

This brings me to invite your attention to a few observations respecting the deportment of physicians toward each other. We are mutually dependent for our character and reputation. It is in our power to do much to exalt or debase others. What then should be our feelings, and what the principles which regulate our conduct, in this respect?

The occupation of medical men, and the nature of their connection with families and individuals, bring them constantly into immediate personal competition. Hence bad feelings are often excited, and we experience a constant tendency to detract from the merit of those who have succeeded to our exclusion. Whether this be the cause, however, or not, certain it is that we have always been notorious for our bad blood and bad faith. The quarrels of physicians have become proverbial; and they are constantly guilty of the most illiberal judgment of each other's principles, knowledge, and practice. Probably nowhere else would the profession, in this respect, bear so favourable an examination, as in the city and community in which we live; yet how much room is there for amendment even here.

What then should regulate our conduct toward each other? We should consider the nature of the art we profess. At best it is involved in many uncertainties and difficulties. We know a little,—we guess a great deal. Of course we are liable to constant mistakes. Every man makes them, and makes them often. I would require no more certain sign of the insufficiency of a man's professional knowledge, than the boast that he was free from them. Now our constant tendency is to overlook our own, and dwell with complacency on those of others. We ought to do precisely the opposite. From a con-

temptation of our own mistakes, we may learn much. It is in fact the basis of experience. From that of others, we gain nothing, but an exaltation of our own pride, at the fancied debasement of another's. Where all are liable to err, charity and liberality of judgment are as politic as they are moral. We should neither disseminate nor dwell upon the slanders uttered against others, for we know how prone men are to misstatements; and the illiberality we exercise toward them may in turn be exercised toward us,—as unjustly and uncharitably. It is enough that we are liable to be mistaken and misapprehended by the rest of the world. Our reputations are assailed, our feelings wounded, by the careless, and unthinking, and sometimes perhaps the malevolent conduct of those with whom we are conversant. Our motives are often misjudged,—even our honesty doubted, our skill and knowledge habitually called in question. Men, women, and children, whose utter ignorance is shown by the very fact that they do not know they are ignorant, are ever ready to pass judgment upon the conduct and management of able and experienced physicians. It seems to be supposed the easiest matter in the world to form an opinion on a medical subject; and it would be sometimes amusing, were it not so embarrassing, to have the opinion of some nurse or old woman gravely quoted as ample authority against us in a case of life and death.

It is enough, I say, that we are liable to all this;—let us not augment the evils of our calling by pursuing the same conduct toward one another, which we complain of the world for exercising toward us. We are apt to judge our brethren, when we have really as few of the materials for a correct judgment, as the world has for forming its opinions concerning us. It is not uncommon to hear peculiarities of practice, which happen to differ widely from the notions which the speaker entertains, branded as the result of gross ignorance, or perversity of intellect, or even of absolute dishonesty. When shall we learn, in this world of ignorance and darkness, where the best lights which any of us obtain, serve but to render us sensible how little we know, and how little way we can penetrate into the truths of nature,—when shall we learn

to admit difference of opinion, even on the most important points, to be no proof of ignorance or wilful perversity? When shall we learn, that candour, liberality, and forbearance in our judgment of the opinions and of the conduct of others, are the surest evidence of elevated attainments on our part? The truly enlightened are always the most candid; for none are so entirely aware of the amount of our ignorance, even on those subjects which we know best.

I have but one further remark to make on the character at which we should aim, and the principles which should govern our conduct, when we enter on our professional career. It embraces a consideration which should be strongly impressed upon us. The physician should consider the place he fills or may fill in society, and the influence he is capable of exerting on the community to which he belongs. Human society, and the influences which form the minds of men constituting it, are made up of a great variety of elements, and not the least among these is the character of individuals. A person of an ordinary station, not unfrequently, by some peculiar strength of character, gives a tone to the society of a place, either for good or evil. Much more may those have this influence, whose education and occupation naturally turn men's attention to them with confidence and respect. We have in this country no permanent class of men, who hold a certain rank and influence from birth or office. The corresponding place here is held by those whose profession or whose character gives them standing or influence. Hence we enter society at an advantage; our very calling predisposes mankind to give us their confidence. It is our duty to see that we do not abuse it.

Now it is very obvious, that an enlightened physician may do much to promote religion, morals, and the cause of education. He may, by his example and that of his family, aid in raising the standard of mental and moral cultivation, wherever he may happen to be situated. He may contribute to the general improvement in taste and the arts. This is obvious enough. But I would dwell particularly on one circumstance in the professional cha-

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racter, which is not so commonly taken into consideration. Physicians are, among us, the only men who, as a class, have a scientific education. They are, by their business, men of science; men, whose habits of investigation and thinking are, or ought to be, of a philosophical character. The study and practice of medicine has eminently a tendency to give this cast to the mind. No man can be regarded as accomplished in this profession, who does not understand the elements of natural philosophy and chemistry as well as of physiology. In our communities the physician is the scientific man of the place. It is his duty, therefore, to keep up his acquaintance with science as he advances in life, and to promote the dissemination of scientific knowledge among his neighbours. The greatest deficiency in the character of men in general is the want of that power of judging with good sense, and of weighing the value of evidence, which is especially imparted by scientific pursuits. This deficiency is to be gradually removed by disseminating among them this kind of knowledge;—and we may do much directly and indirectly toward promoting this result. It is often urged as an objection to this attempt, that a little learning is dangerous. It is not true. A little learning is not dangerous on any subject, if it be truly elementary, if it be complete as far as it goes, and if its possessor be fully aware that the first and most important step, in the acquisition of knowledge, is to learn fully the limits of our knowledge; and, as we go on acquiring it, to be able to measure exactly the progress we have made, and the uses to which we may be able to apply it.

I have, thus, Gentlemen, made such remarks on the conduct and character which become us in our professional relation, as appeared to me worthy of your serious consideration, and calculated to aid you in establishing in your minds the principles which are hereafter to guide you. I have been influenced, in selecting the topics of this discourse, by the reflection, that, without a due regard to the principles of conduct which I have endeavoured to enforce, professional qualifications alone neither will nor ought to conduct you to the eminence to which you no doubt aspire.

A

DISCOURSE

ON

THE PROGRESS

OF

SCIENCE AND LITERATURE.

BY THE

HON. JOSEPH STORY, LL. D.

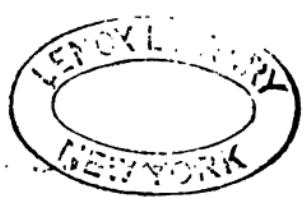
ONE OF THE JUDGES OF THE SUPREME COURT OF THE
UNITED STATES.

EDINBURGH:

THOMAS CLARK, 38, GEORGE STREET.

MDCCCXXXVI.

5



JAMES BURNET, PRINTER, 5, SHAKSPEARE SQUARE.

DISCOURSE.*

GENTLEMEN,

If I had consulted my own wishes, I should not have presumed to address you on the present occasion. The habits of professional employment rarely admit of leisure for the indulgence of literary taste. And in a science, whose mastery demands a whole life of laborious diligence, whose details are inexhaustible, and whose intricacies task the most acute intellects, it would be matter of surprise, if every hour withdrawn from its concerns did not somewhat put at hazard the success of its votary. Nor can it escape observation, how much the technical doctrines of a jurisprudence, drawn from remote antiquity, and expanding itself over the business of many ages, must have a tendency to chill that enthusiasm, which lends encouragement to every enterprise, and to obscure those finer forms of thought, which give to literature its lovelier, I may say, its inexpressible graces. The consciousness of difficulties of this sort may well be supposed to press upon every professional mind. They can be overlooked by those only, whose youth has not been tried in the hard school of experience, or whose genius gives no credit to impossibilities.

* Pronounced before the Phi Beta Kappa Society, at the anniversary celebration on the 31st day of August.

I have not hesitated, however, to yield to your invitation, trusting to that indulgence, which has not hitherto been withheld from well meant efforts, and not unwilling to add the testimony of my own example, however humble, in favour of the claims of this society to the services of all its members.

We live in an extraordinary age. It has been marked by events, which will leave a durable impression upon the pages of history by their own intrinsic importance. But they will be read with far deeper emotions in their effects upon future ages; in their consequences upon the happiness of whole communities; in the direct or silent changes forced by them into the very structure of society; in the establishment of a new and mighty empire, the empire of public opinion; in the operation of what Lord Bacon has characterized almost as supreme power, the power of knowledge, working its way to universality, and interposing checks upon government and people, by means gentle and decisive, which have never before been fully felt, and are even now, perhaps, incapable of being perfectly comprehended.

Other ages have been marked by brilliant feats in arms. Wars have been waged for the best and for the worst of purposes. The ambitious conqueror has trodden whole nations under his feet, to satisfy the lust of power; and the eagles of his victories have stood on either extreme of the civilized world. The barbarian has broken loose from his northern fastnesses, and overwhelmed in his progress temples and thrones, the adorers of the true God, and the worshippers of idols. Heroes and patriots have successfully resisted the invaders of their country, or perished in its defence; and in each way have given immortality to their exploits. Kingdoms have been rent asunder by intestine broils, or by struggles for freedom. Bigotry has traced out the march of its persecutions in footsteps of blood; and superstition employed its terrors to nerve the arm of the tyrant, or immolate his victims. There have been ancient leagues for the partition of empires, for the support of thrones, for the fencing out of human improvement, and for the

consolidation of arbitrary power. There have, too, been bright spots on the earth, where the cheering light of liberty shone in peace ; where learning unlocked its stores in various profusion ; where the arts unfolded themselves in every form of beauty and grandeur ; where literature loved to linger in academic shades, or enjoy the public sunshine ; where song lent new inspiration to the temple ; where eloquence alternately consecrated the hall of legislation, or astonished the forum with its appeals.

We may not assert, that the present age can lay claim to the production of any one of the mightiest efforts of human genius. Homer and Virgil, and Shakspeare and Milton were of other days, and yet stand unrivalled in song. Time has not inscribed upon the sepulchre of the dead any nobler names in eloquence, than Demosthenes and Cicero. Who has outdone the chisel of Phidias, or the pencil of Michael Angelo, and Raffaelle ? Where are the monuments of our day, whose architecture dares to contend with the Doric, Ionic, or Corinthian of Greece, or even with the Composite, or Gothic of later times ? History yet points to the pregnant though brief text of Tacitus, and acknowledges no finer models than those of antiquity. The stream of a century has swept by the works of Locke and Newton ; yet they still stand alone in unapproached, in unapproachable majesty.

Nor may we pronounce, that the present age by its *collective* splendour in arts and arms casts into shade all former epochs. The era of Pericles witnessed a combination of talents and acquirements, of celebrated deeds and celebrated works, which the lapse of twenty-two centuries has left unobsured. Augustus, surveying his mighty empire, could scarcely contemplate with more satisfaction the triumph of his arms, than the triumph of the philosophy and literature of Rome. France yet delights to dwell on the times of Lewis the Fourteenth, as the proudest in her annals ; and England, with far less propriety, looks back upon the reign of Queen Anne for the best models of her literary excellence.

But, though we may not arrogate to ourselves the possession of the first genius, or the first era in human

history, let it not be imagined, that we do not live in an extraordinary age. It is impossible to look around us without alternate emotions of exultation and astonishment. What shall we say of one revolution, which created a nation out of thirteen feeble colonies, and founded the empire of liberty upon the basis of the perfect equality in rights and representation of all its citizens? which commenced in a struggle by enlightened men for principles, and not for places, and in its progress and conclusion exhibited examples of heroism, patriotic sacrifices, and disinterested virtue, which have never been surpassed in the most favoured regions? What shall we say of this nation, which has in fifty years quadrupled its population, and spread itself from the Atlantic to the Rocky mountains, not by the desolations of successful war, but by the triumphant march of industry and enterprise? What shall we say of another revolution, which shook Europe to its centre, overturned principalities and thrones, demolished oppressions, whose iron had for ages entered into the souls of their subjects, and after various fortunes of victory and defeat, of military despotism and popular commotion, ended at last in the planting of free institutions, free tenures, and representative government in the very soil of absolute monarchy? What shall we say of another revolution, or rather series of revolutions, which has restored to South America the independence, torn from her three centuries ago by the force or by the fraud of those nations, whose present visitations bespeak a Providence, which superintends and measures out at awful distances its rewards and its retributions? She has risen, as it were, from the depths of the ocean, where she had been buried for ages. Her shores no longer murmur with the hoarse surges of her unnavigated waters, or echo the jealous footsteps of her armed oppressors. Her forests and her table lands, her mountains and her valleys gladden with the voices of the free. She welcomes to her ports the whitening sails of commerce. She feels, that the treasures of her mines, the broad expanse of her rivers, the beauty of her lakes, the grandeur of her scenery, the products of her fertile and inexhaustible soil, are

no longer the close domain of a distant sovereign, but the free inheritance of her own children. She sees, that these are to bind her to other nations by ties, which outlive all compacts, and all dynasties, by ties of mutual sympathy, mutual equality, and mutual interest.

But such events sink into nothing, compared with the great moral, political, and literary revolutions, by which they have been accompanied. Upon some of these topics, I may not indulge myself even for a moment. They have been discussed here, and in other places, in a manner, which forbids all hope of more comprehensive illustration. They may, indeed, be still followed out; but whoever dares the difficulties of such a task, will falter with unequal footsteps.

What I propose to myself on the present occasion is of a far more limited and humble nature. It is to trace out some of the circumstances of our age, which connect themselves closely with the cause of science and letters; to sketch here and there a light and shadow of our days; —to look somewhat at our own prospects and attainments;—and thus to lay before you something for reflection, for encouragement, and for admonition.

One of the most striking characteristics of our age, and that, indeed, which has worked deepest in all the changes of its fortunes and pursuits, is the general diffusion of knowledge. This is emphatically the age of reading. In other times, this was the privilege of the few; in ours, it is the possession of the many. Learning once constituted the accomplishment of those in the higher orders of society, who had no relish for active employment, and of those, whose monastic lives and religious profession sought to escape from the weariness of their common duties. Its progress may be said to have been gradually downwards from the higher to the middle classes of society. It scarcely reached at all, in its joys or its sorrows, in its instructions or its fantasies, the home of the peasant and artisan. It now radiates in all directions; and exerts its central force more in the middle, than in any other class of society. The means of education were formerly within the reach of few. It re-

quired wealth to accumulate knowledge. The possession of a library was no ordinary achievement. The learned leisure of a fellowship in some university seemed almost indispensable for any successful studies ; and the patronage of princes and courtiers was the narrow avenue to public favour. I speak of a period at little more than the distance of two centuries ; not of particular instances, but of the general cast and complexion of life.

The principal cause of this change is to be found in the freedom of the press, or rather in this co-operating with the cheapness of the press. It has been aided also by the system of free schools, wherever it has been established ; by that liberal commerce, which connects by golden chains the interests of mankind ; by that spirit of inquiry, which protestantism awakened throughout Christian Europe ; and above all by those necessities, which have compelled even absolute monarchs to appeal to the patriotism and common sentiments of their subjects. Little more than a century has elapsed since the press in England was under the control of a licenser ; and within our own days only has it ceased to be a contempt, punishable by imprisonment, to print the debates of Parliament. We all know how it still is on the continent of Europe. It either speaks in timid under tones, or echoes back the prescribed formularies of the government. The moment publicity is given to affairs of state, they excite every where an irresistible interest. If discussion be permitted, it will soon be necessary to enlist talents to defend, as well as talents to devise measures. The daily press first instructed men in their wants, and soon found, that the eagerness of curiosity outstripped the power of gratifying it. No man can now doubt the fact, that wherever the press is free, it will emancipate the people : wherever knowledge circulates unrestrained, it is no longer safe to oppress ; wherever public opinion is enlightened, it nourishes an independent, masculine, and healthful spirit. If Faustus were now living, he might exclaim with all the enthusiasm of Archimedes, and with a far nearer approach to the truth, Give me where I may place a free press, and I will shake the world.

One interesting effect, which owes its origin to this universal love and power of reading, is felt in the altered condition of authors themselves. They no longer depend upon the smiles of a favoured few. The patronage of the great is no longer submissively entreated, or exultingly proclaimed. Their patrons are the public; their readers are the civilized world. They address themselves, not to the present generation alone, but aspire to instruct posterity. No blushing dedications seek an easy passport to fame, or flatter the perilous condescension of pride. No illuminated letters flourish on the silky page, asking admission to the courtly drawing-room. Authors are no longer the humble companions or dependents of the nobility; but they constitute the chosen ornaments of society, and are welcomed to the gay circles of fashion and the palaces of princes. Theirs is no longer an unthrifty vocation, closely allied to penury; but an elevated profession, maintaining its thousands in lucrative pursuits. It is not with them, as it was in the days of Milton, whose immortal "Paradise Lost" drew five sterling pounds, with a contingent of five more, from the reluctant bookseller.

My Lord Coke would hardly find good authority in our day for his provoking commentary on the memorable statute of the fourth Henry, which declares that "none henceforth shall use to multiply gold or silver, or use the craft of multiplication," in which he gravely enumerates five classes of beggars, ending the catalogue in his own quaint phraseology with "poetasters," and repeating for the benefit of young apprentices of the law the sad admonition,

"Sepe pater dixit, Studium quid inutile tentas?
Mænonides nullas ipse reliquit opes."

There are certainly among us those, who are within the penalty of this prohibition, if my Lord Coke's account of the matter is to be believed, for they are in possession of what he defines to be "a certain subtile and spiritual substance extracted out of things," whereby

they transmute many things into gold. I am indeed afraid that the magician of Abbotsford is accustomed to “use the craft of multiplication;” and most of us know to our cost, that he has changed many strange substances into very gold and very silver. Yet even if he be an old offender in this way, as is shrewdly suspected, there is little danger of his conviction in this liberal age, since, though he gains by every thing he parts with, we are never willing to part with any thing we receive from him.

The rewards of authorship are almost as sure and regular now, as those of any other profession. There are, indeed, instances of wonderful success, and sad failure; of genius pining in neglect; of labour bringing nothing but sickness of the heart; of fruitless enterprise, baffled in every adventure; of learning waiting its appointed time to die in patient suffering. But this is the lot of some in all times. Disappointment crowds fast upon human footsteps in whatever paths they tread. Eminent good fortune is a prize rarely given even to the foremost in the race. And after all, he, who has read human life most closely, knows that happiness is not the constant attendant of the highest public favour; and that it rather belongs to those, who, if they seldom soar, seldom fall.

Scarcely is a work of real merit dry from the English press, before it wings its way to both the Indies and Americas. It is found in the most distant climates, and the most sequestered retreats. It charms the traveller as he sails over rivers and oceans. It visits our lakes and our forests. It kindles the curiosity of the thick-breathing city, and cheers the log hut of the mountaineer. The Lake of the Woods resounds with the minstrelsy of our mother tongue, and the plains of Hindostan are tributary to its praise. Nay, more, what is the peculiar pride of our age, the Bible may now circulate its consolations and instructions among the poor and forlorn of every land, in their native dialect. Such is the triumph of letters; such is the triumph of Christian benevolence.

With such a demand for books, with such facilities of intercourse, it is no wonder, that reading should cease to be a mere luxury, and should be classed among the ne-

cessaries of life. Authors may now, with a steady confidence, boast, that they possess a hold on the human mind, which grapples closer and mightier than all others. They may feel sure, that every just sentiment, every enlightened opinion, every earnest breathing after excellence will awaken kindred sympathies from the rising to the setting sun.

Nor should it be overlooked, what a beneficial impulse has been thus communicated to education among the female sex. If Christianity may be said to have given a permanent elevation to woman, as an intellectual and moral being, it is as true, that the present age, above all others, has given play to her genius, and taught us to reverence its influence. It was the fashion of other times to treat the literary acquirements of the sex, as starched pedantry, or vain pretensions; to stigmatize them as inconsistent with those domestic affections and virtues, which constitute the charm of society. We had abundant homilies read upon their amiable weaknesses and sentimental delicacy, upon their timid gentleness and submissive dependence; as if to taste the fruit of knowledge were a deadly sin, and ignorance were the sole guardian of innocence. Their whole lives were "sicklied o'er with the pale cast of thought," and concealment of intellectual power was often resorted to, to escape the dangerous imputation of masculine strength. In the higher walks of life, the satirist was not without colour for the suggestion, that it was

"A youth of folly, an old age of cards;"

and that elsewhere, "most women had no character at all," beyond that of purity and devotion to their families. Admirable as are these qualities, it seemed an abuse of the gifts of Providence to deny to mothers the power of instructing their children, to wives the privilege of sharing the intellectual pursuits of their husbands, to sisters and daughters the delight of ministering knowledge in the fireside circle, to youth and beauty the charm of refined sense, to age and infirmity the consolation of studies,

which elevate the soul and gladden the listless hours of despondency.

These things have in a great measure passed away. The prejudices, which dishonoured the sex, have yielded to the influence of truth. By slow but sure advances education has extended itself through all ranks of female society. There is no longer any dread, least the culture of science should foster that masculine boldness or restless independence, which alarms by its sallies, or wounds by its inconsistencies. We have seen that here, as every where else, knowledge is favourable to human virtue and human happiness ; that the refinement of literature adds lustre to the devotion of piety ; that true learning, like true taste, is modest and unostentatious ; that grace of manners receives a higher polish from the discipline of the schools ; that cultivated genius sheds a cheering light over domestic duties, and its very sparkles, like those of the diamond, attest at once its power and its purity. There is not a rank of female society, however high, which does not now pay homage to literature, or that would not blush even at the suspicion of that ignorance, which a half century ago was neither uncommon nor discreditable. There is not a parent, whose pride may not glow at the thought, that his daughter's happiness is in a great measure within her own command, whether she keeps the cool sequestered vale of life, or visits the busy walks of fashion.

A new path is thus open for female exertion, to alleviate the pressure of misfortune, without any supposed sacrifice of dignity or modesty. Man no longer aspires to an exclusive dominion in authorship. He has rivals or allies in almost every department of knowledge ; and they are to be found among those, whose elegance of manners and blamelessness of life command his respect, as much as their talents excite his admiration. Who is there, that does not contemplate with enthusiasm the precious fragments of Elizabeth Smith, the venerable learning of Elizabeth Carter, the elevated piety of Hannah More, the persuasive sense of Mrs. Barbauld, the elegant memoirs of her accomplished niece, the bewitching

fictions of Madame D'Arblay, the vivid, picturesque, and terrific imagery of Mrs. Radcliffe, the glowing poetry of Mrs. Hemans, the matchless wit, the inexhaustible conversations, the fine character painting, the practical instructions of Miss Edgeworth, the great KNOWN, standing in her own department by the side of the great UNKNOWN?

Another circumstance, illustrative of the character of our age, is the bold and fearless spirit of its speculations. Nothing is more common in the history of mankind, than a servile adoption of received opinions, and a timid acquiescence in whatever is established. It matters not, whether a doctrine or institution owes its existence to accident or design, to wisdom, or ignorance, or folly, there is a natural tendency to give it an undue value in proportion to its antiquity. What is obscure in its origin warms and gratifies the imagination. What in its progress has insinuated itself into the general habits and manners of a nation, becomes embedded in the solid mass of society. It is only at distant intervals, from an aggregation of causes, that some stirring revolution breaks up the old foundations, or some mighty genius storms and overthrows the entrenchments of error. Who would believe, if history did not record the fact, that the metaphysics of Aristotle, or rather the misuse of his metaphysics, held the human mind in bondage for two thousand years? that Galileo was imprisoned for proclaiming the true theory of the solar system? that the magnificent discoveries of Sir Isaac Newton encountered strong opposition from philosophers? that Locke's *Essay on the Human Understanding*, found its way with infinite difficulty into the studies of the English Universities? that Lord Bacon's method of induction never reached its splendid triumphs until our day? that the doctrine of the divine right of kings, and the absolute allegiance of subjects, constituted nearly the whole theory of government from the fall of the Roman Republic to the seventeenth century? that Christianity itself was overlaid and almost buried for many centuries, by the dreamy comments of monks, the superstitions of fanatics, and the traditions of the church? that it was an execrable sin throughout Christendom to read

and circulate the Holy Scriptures in the vulgar tongue? Nay, that it is still a crime in some nations, of which the Inquisition would take no very indulgent notice, even if the Head of the Catholic Church should not feel, that Bible societies deserve his denunciation? Even the great reformers of the Protestant Church left their work but half done, or rather came to it with notions far too limited for its successful accomplishment. They combated errors and abuses, and laid the broad foundations of a more rational faith. But they were themselves insensible to the just rights and obligations of religious inquiry. They thought all error intolerable; but they forgot in their zeal, that the question, what was truth, was open to all for discussion. They assumed to themselves the very infallibility, which they rebuked in the Romish Church; and as unrelentingly persecuted heresies of opinion, as those, who had sat for ages in the judgment-seat of St. Peter. They allowed, indeed, that all men had a right to inquire; but they thought, that all must, if honest, come to the same conclusion with themselves; that the full extent of Christian liberty was the liberty of adopting those opinions, which they promulgated as true. The unrestrained right of private judgment, the glorious privilege of a free conscience, as now established in this favoured land, was farther from their thoughts even than Popery itself. I would not be unjust to these great men. The fault was less theirs than that of the age in which they lived. They partook only of that spirit of infirmity, which religion itself may not wholly extinguish in its sincere, but over zealous votaries. It is their glory to have laid the deep, and, I trust, the imperishable foundations of Protestantism. May it be ours to finish the work, as they would have done it, if they had been permitted to enjoy the blessed light of these latter times. But let not Protestants boast of their justice or their charity, while they continue to deny an equality of rights to the Catholics.

The progress of the spirit of free inquiry cannot escape the observation of the most superficial examiner of history. The press, by slow but firm steps, first felt its

way, and began its attacks upon the outworks of received opinions. One error after another silently crumbled into the dust, until success seemed to justify the boldest experiments. Opinions in science, in physic, in philosophy, in morals, in religion, in literature have been subjected to the severest scrutiny; and many, which had grown hoary under the authority of ages, have been quietly conveyed to their last home with scarcely a solitary mourner to grace their obsequies. The contest, indeed, between old and new opinions has been, and continues to be, maintained with great obstinacy and ability on all sides, and has forced even the sluggish into the necessity of thinking for themselves. Scholars have been driven to arm themselves for attack, as well as for defence; and in a literary warfare, nearly universal, have been obliged to make their appeals to the living judgment of the public for protection, as well as for encouragement.

The effects of this animated and free discussion have, in general, been very salutary. There is not a single department of life, which has not been invigorated by its influence, nor a single profession, which has not partaken of its success.

In jurisprudence, which reluctantly admits any new adjunct, and counts in its train a thousand champions ready to rise in defence of its formularies and technical rules, the victory has been brilliant and decisive. The civil and the common law have yielded to the pressure of the times, and have adopted much, which philosophy and experience have recommended, although it stood upon no text of the Pandects, and claimed no support from the feudal policy. Commercial law, at least so far as England and America are concerned, is the creation of the eighteenth century. It started into life with the genius of Lord Mansfield, and gathering in its course, whatever was valuable in the earlier institutes of foreign countries, has reflected back upon them its own superior lights, so as to become the guide and oracle of the commercial world. If my own feelings do not mislead me, the profession itself has also acquired a liberality of opinion, a comprehensiveness of argumenta-

tion, a sympathy with the other pursuits of life, and a lofty eloquence, which, if ever before, belonged to it only in the best days of the best orators of antiquity. It was the bitter scoff of other times, approaching to the sententiousness of a proverb, that to be a good lawyer was to be an indifferent statesman. The profession has outlived the truth of the sarcasm. At the present moment England may count lawyers among her most gifted statesmen; and in America, I need but appeal to those, who hear me, for the fact, our most eminent statesmen have been, nay, still are the brightest ornaments of our bar.

The same improving spirit has infused itself into the body of legislation and political economy. I may not adventure upon this extensive topic. But I would for a moment advert to the more benignant character manifested in the criminal law. Harsh and vindictive punishments have been discountenanced or abolished. The sanguinary codes, over which humanity wept, and philosophy shuddered, have felt the potent energy of reform, and substituted for agonizing terror the gentle spirit of mercy. America has taken the lead in this glorious march of philanthropy, under the banners of that meek sect, which does good by stealth, and blushes to find it fame. There is not in the code of the Union, and probably not in that of any single State, more than ten crimes, to which the sober judgment of legislation now affixes the punishment of death. England, indeed, counts in her bloody catalogue more than one hundred and sixty capital offences; but the dawn of a brighter day is opening upon her. After years of doubtful struggle, the meliorations suggested by the lamented Sir Samuel Romilly have forced their way through Parliament to the throne, and an enlightened ministry is redeeming her from this reproach upon her national character.

In medicine, throughout all its branches, many extraordinary changes have taken place. In this indeed, inductive philosophy looks for some of its fairest trophies. In anatomy, in physiology, in pharmacy, in therapeutics, instructed skill, patient observation, and accurate deduction have been substituted for vague conjecture, and bold

pretension. Instead of mystical compounds, and nostrums and panaceas, science has introduced its powerful principles, and thus given energy and certainty to practice. We dream no longer over the favourite theories of the arts succeeding each other in endless progression. We are content to adopt a truer course ; to read nature in her operations ; to compel her to give up her secrets to the expositations of her ministers, and to answer the persevering interrogatories of her worshippers. Chemistry by its brilliant discoveries, and careful analysis, has unfolded laws which surprise us by their simplicity, as well as by the extent of their operations. By its magic touch the very elements of things seem decomposed, and to stand in disembodied essences before us.

In theology a new era has commenced. From the days of Grotius almost to our own, a sluggish indifference to critical learning fastened upon most of those, who administered the high solemnities of religion. Here and there, indeed, a noble spirit was seen, like Old Mortality, wiping away the ancient dust, and retracing the fading lines, and in his zeal for truth undergoing almost a moral martyrdom. But the mass of professed theologians slumbered over the sacred text in easy security, or poured the distillation of one commentary into another, giving little improvement to the flavour and none to the substance. They were at length roused by a spirit of another kind which by ridicule, or argument, or denunciation of abuses, was attempting to sap the very foundations of Christianity. It made its approaches in silence, until it had attained strength enough for an open assault ; and at last, in a moment of political revolution, it erected the standard of infidelity in the very centre of Christendom. Fortunately, the critical studies of the scholars of the old world enabled them to meet the difficulties of the occasion. The immense collations of manuscripts and various readings, by such men as Mills and Wetstein and Kennicott, prepared the way for a more profound investigation of the genuineness and authenticity of the Scriptures. And the sober sense and unwearied diligence of our age have given to the principles of interpretation an

accuracy and authority, to biblical researches a dignity and certainty, to practical as well as doctrinal theology a logic and illustration, unparalleled in the annals of the Church. If Christianity has been assailed in our day with uncommon ability, it has never been defended with more various learning. If it has surrendered here and there an interpolated passage, it has placed almost beyond the reach of doubt the general integrity of the text. If it has ceased in some favoured lands to claim the civil arm for its protection, it has established itself in the hearts of men by all which genius could bring to illumine, or eloquence to grace its sublime truths.

In pure mathematics and physical science there has been a correspondent advancement. The discoveries of Newton have been followed out and demonstrated by new methods and analyses to an extent, which would surprise that great philosopher himself, if he were now living. I need but name such men as La Grange and La Place. By means of observations, the Heavens have been, if I may so say, circumnavigated, and every irregularity and perturbation of the motions of the heavenly bodies ascertained to depend upon the same eternal law of gravitation, and to result in the harmonious balance of forces. But it is in physical science, and especially in its adaptation to the arts of life, that the present age may claim precedence of all others. I have already alluded to chemistry, which has enabled us to fix and discharge colours with equal certainty ; now to imitate the whiteness of the driven snow, and now the loveliness of the Tyrian dyes. But who can measure the extent of the changes in agriculture, manufactures, and commerce, produced by the steam-engine of Watt, by the cotton-machinery of Arkwright, by the power-looms of a later period, by the cotton-gin of Whitney, and though last, not least, by the steam-boat of Fulton ? When I name these, I select but a few among the inventions of our age, in which nature and art minister alternately to the wants, and the triumphs of man.

If in metaphysics no brilliant discoveries have rewarded the industry of its votaries, it may nevertheless be

said, that the laws of the mind have been investigated with no common success. They have been illustrated by a fuller display of the doctrine of association of Hartley, by the common sense of Reid, by the acute discrimination of Brown, and by the incomparable elegance of Dugald Stewart. If, indeed, in this direction any new discoveries are to be expected, it appears to me, with great deference, that they must be sought through more exact researches into that branch of physiology, which respects the structure and functions of those organs, which are immediately connected with the operations of the mind.

I have but glanced at most of the preceding subjects, many of which are remote from the studies, which have engaged my life, and to all of which, I am conscious, that I am unable to do even moderate justice.

But it is to the department of general and miscellaneous literature, and above all, of English literature, that we may look with pride and confidence. Here the genius of the age has displayed itself in innumerable varieties of form and beauty, from the humble page, which presumes to teach the infant mind the first lines of thought, to the lofty works, which discourse of history, and philosophy, and ethics, and government; from the voyager, who collects his budget of wonders for the amusement of the idle, to the gallant adventurer to the Pole, and the scientific traveller on the Andes. Poetry, too, has dealt out its enchantments with profuse liberality, now startling us with its visionary horrors and superhuman pageants, now scorching us with its fierce and caustic satire, now lapping us in Elysium by the side of sunny shores, or lovely lakes, or haunted groves, or consecrated ruins. It is, indeed, no exaggeration of the truth to declare, that polite literature, from the light essay to the most profound disquisition, can enumerate more excellent works, as the production of the last fifty years, than of all former ages since the revival of letters.

Periodical literature has elevated itself from an amusement of cultivated minds, or a last resort of impoverished authors, to the first rank of composition, in which the

proudest are not ashamed to labour, and the highest may gain fame and consequence. A half century ago a single magazine and a single review almost sufficed the whole reading public of England and America. At present a host crowd round us, from the gossamery repository, which adorns the toilet, to the grave review, which discusses the fate of empires, arraigns the counsels of statesmen, expounds all mysteries in policy and science, or, stooping from such pursuits, condescends, like other absolute powers, sometimes to crush an author to death, and sometimes to elevate him to a height, where he faints from the mere sense of giddiness. We have our journals of science and journals of arts; the New Monthly with the refreshing genius of Campbell, and the Old Monthly with the companionable qualities of a familiar friend. We have the Quarterly Reviewers, the loyal defenders of Church and State, the *laudatores temporis acti*, the champions, ay, and exemplars too, of classical learning, the admirers of ancient establishments and ancient opinions. We have on the other hand the Edinburgh, the bold advocates of reform, and still bolder political economists, hunting out public abuses, and alarming idle gentlemen pensioners with tales of misapplied charities; now deriding with bitter taunts the dull but busy gleaners in literature; now brightening their pages with the sunshine of wit; and now paying homage to genius by expounding its labours in language of transcendent felicity. One might approach nearer home, and, if it were not dangerous to rouse the attention of critics, might tell of a certain North American, which has done as much to give a solid cast to our literature, and a national feeling to our authors, as any single event since the peace of 1783.

Another interesting accompaniment of the literature of the age, is its superior moral purity over former productions. The obscene jests, the low ribaldry, and the coarse allusions, which shed a disastrous light on so many ~~pages~~ of misguided genius in former times, find no sympathy in ours. He, who would now command respect, must write with pure sentiments and elevated feelings; he, who would now please, must be chaste as well as 160

witty, and moral as well as brilliant. Fiction itself is restrained to the decencies of life; and whether in the drama, or the novel, or the song, with a few melancholy exceptions, it seeks no longer to kindle fires, which would consume the youthful enthusiast, or to instil precepts, which would blast the loveliness of the innocent.

But let it not be imagined, that in the present state of things, there is nothing for regret, and nothing for admonition. The picture of the age, when truly drawn, is not wholly composed of lights. There are shades, which disturb the beauty of the colouring, and points of reflection, where there is no longer harmony in the proportions.

The unavoidable tendency of free speculation is to lead to occasional extravagances. When once the reverence for authority is shaken, there is apt to grow up in its stead a cold scepticism respecting established opinions. Their very antiquity under such circumstances betrays us into suspicion of their truth. The overthrow of error itself urges on a feverish excitement for discussion, and a restless desire for novelty, which blind, if they do not confound the judgment. Thus, the human mind not unfrequently passes from one extreme to another; from one of implicit faith, to one of absolute incredulity.

There is not a remark deducible from the history of mankind more important, than that advanced by Mr. Burke, that 'to innovate is not to reform.' That is, if I may venture to follow out the sense of this great man, that innovation is not necessarily improvement; that novelty is not necessarily excellence; that what was deemed wisdom in former times, is not necessarily folly in ours; that the course of the human mind has not been to present a multitude of truths in one great step of its glory, but to gather them up insensibly in its progress, and to place them at distances, sometimes at vast distances, as guides or warnings to succeeding ages. If Greece and Rome did not solve all the problems of civil government, or enunciate the admirable theorem of representative legislation, it should never be forgotten, that from them we have learned those principles of liberty, which in the worst of times have consoled the patriot for all his suffer-

ings. If they cannot boast of the various attainments of our days, they may point out to us the lessons of wisdom, the noble discoveries and the imperishable labours of their mighty dead. It is not necessarily error to follow the footsteps of ancient philosophy, to reverence the precepts of ancient criticism, to meditate over the pages of ancient exploits, or to listen to the admonitions of ancient oratory.

We may even gather instruction from periods of another sort, in which there was a darkness, which might be felt, as well as seen. Where is to be found a nobler institution than the trial by jury, that impregnable bulwark of civil liberty? Yet it belongs to ages of Gothic darkness, or Saxon barbarism. Where is there a more enduring monument of political wisdom, than the separation of the judicial from legislative powers? Yet it was the slow production of ages, which are obscured by the mists of time. Where shall we point out an invention, whose effects have been more wide, or more splendid, than those of the mariner's compass? Yet five centuries have rolled over the grave of its celebrated discoverer. Where shall we find the true logic of physical science so admirably stated, as in the *Novum Organum* of him, who more than two centuries ago saw, as in vision, and foretold, as in prophecy, the sublime discoveries of these latter days? This is a topic, which may not wholly be passed over, since it presents some of the dangers to which we are exposed, and calls upon us to watch the progress of opinion, and guard against the seductive influence of novelties. The busy character of the age is perpetually pressing forward all sorts of objections to established rules in politics, and morals, and literature. In order to escape from the imputation of triteness, some authors tax their ingenuity to surprise us with bold paradoxes, or run down with wit and ridicule the doctrines of common sense, appealing sometimes to the ignorance, and sometimes to the pride of their readers. Their object is not so much to produce what is true, as what is striking; what is profound, as what is interesting; what will endure the test of future criticism, as what will buoy

itself up on the current of a shallow popularity. In the rage for originality, the old standards of taste are deserted, or treated with cold indifference ; and thus false and glittering thoughts, and hurried and flippant fantasies are substituted for exact and philosophical reasoning.

There is, too, a growing propensity to disparage the importance of classical learning. Many causes, especially in England and America, have conduced to this result. The signal success, which has followed the enterprises in physical science, in mechanics, in chemistry, in civil engineering, and the ample rewards both of fortune and fame attendant upon that success, have had a very powerful influence upon the best talents of both countries. There is, too, in the public mind a strong disposition to turn every thing to a practical account, to deal less with learning, and more with experiment ; to seek the solid comforts of opulence, rather than the indulgence of mere intellectual luxury. On the other hand, from the increase of materials, as well as of critical skill, high scholarship is a prize of no easy attainment ; and when attained, it slowly receives public favour, and still more slowly reaches the certainty of wealth. Indeed, it is often combined with a contemplative shyness, and sense of personal independence, which yield little to policy, and with difficulty brook opposition. The honours of the world rarely cluster round it, and it cherishes with most enthusiasm those feelings, which the active pursuits of life necessarily impair, if they do not wholly extinguish. The devotion to it, therefore, where it exists, often becomes our exclusive passion ; and thus the gratification of it becomes the end, instead of the means of life. Instances of extraordinary success by mere scholarship are more rare than in other professions. It is not, then, to be wondered at, that the prudence of some minds, and the ambition of others, should shrink from labours, which demand days and nights of study, and hold out rewards, which are distant, or pleasures, which are for the most part purely intellectual.

Causes like these, in an age, which scrutinizes and questions the pretensions of every department of litera-

ture, have contributed to bring into discussion the use and the value of classical learning. I do not stand up on this occasion to vindicate its claims, or extol its merits. That would be a fit theme for one of our most distinguished scholars, in a large discourse. But I may not withhold my willing testimony to its excellence, nor forget the fond regret, with which I left its enticing studies for the discipline of more severe instructors.

The importance of classical learning to professional education is so obvious, that the surprise is, that it could ever have become matter of disputation. I speak not of its power in refining the taste, in disciplining the judgment, in invigorating the understanding, or in warming the heart with elevated sentiments; but of its power of direct, positive, necessary instruction. Until the eighteenth century, the mass of science in its principal branches was deposited in the dead languages, and much of it still reposes there. To be ignorant of these languages is to shut out the lights of former times, or to examine them only through the glimmerings of inadequate translations. What shall we say of the jurist, who never aspired to learn the maxims of law and equity, which adorn the Roman codes? What of the physician, who could deliberately surrender all the knowledge heaped up for so many centuries in the latinity of continental Europe? What of the minister of religion, who should choose not to study the Scriptures in the original tongue, and should be content to trust his faith and his hopes, for time and for eternity, to the dimness of translations, which may reflect the literal import, but rarely can reflect with unbroken force the beautiful spirit of the text? Shall he, whose vocation it is "to allure to brighter worlds and lead the way," be himself the blind leader of the blind? Shall he follow the commentaries of fallible man, instead of gathering the true sense from the Gospels themselves? Shall he venture upon the exposition of divine truths, whose studies have never aimed at the first principles of interpretation? Shall he proclaim the doctrines of salvation, who knows not, and cares not, whether he preaches an idle gloss or the genuine text of

revelation? If a theologian may not pass his life in collecting the various readings, he may, and ought to aspire to that criticism, which illustrates religion by all the resources of human learning; which studies the manners and institutions of the age and country, in which Christianity was first promulgated; which kindles an enthusiasm for its precepts by familiarity with the persuasive language of Him, who poured out his blessings on the mount, and of him, at whose impressive appeal Felix trembled.

I pass over all consideration of the written treasures of antiquity, which have survived the wreck of empires and dynasties, of monumental trophies and triumphal arches, of palaces of princes and temples of the Gods. I pass over all consideration of those admired compositions, in which wisdom speaks, as with a voice from Heaven; of those sublime efforts of poetical genius, which still freshen, as they pass from age to age, in undying vigour; of those finished histories, which still enlighten and instruct governments in their duty and their destiny; of those matchless orations, which roused nations to arms, and chained senates to the chariot-wheels of all-conquering eloquence. These all may now be read in our vernacular tongue. Ay, as one remembers the face of a dead friend by gathering up the broken fragments of his image—as one listens to the tale of a dream twice told—as one catches the roar of the ocean in the ripple of a rivulet—as one sees the blaze of noon in the first glimmer of twilight.

There is one objection, however, on which I would for a moment dwell, because it has a commanding influence over many minds, and is clothed with a specious importance. It is often said, that there have been eminent men and eminent writers, to whom the ancient languages were unknown; men, who have risen by the force of their talents, and writers, who have written with a purity and ease, which hold them up as models for imitation. On the other hand, it is as often said, that scholars do not always compose either with elegance or chasteness; that their diction is sometimes loose and

harsh, and sometimes ponderous and affected. Be it so, —I am not disposed to call in question the accuracy of either statement. But I would nevertheless say, that the presence of classical learning was not the cause of the faults of the one class, nor the absence of it the cause of the excellence of the other. And I would put this fact, as an answer to all such reasonings, that there is not a single language of modern Europe, in which literature has made any considerable advances, which is not directly of Roman origin, or has not incorporated into its very structure many, very many of the idioms and peculiarities of the ancient tongues. The English language affords a strong illustration of the truth of this remark. It abounds with words and meanings drawn from classical sources. Innumerable phrases retain the symmetry of their ancient dress. Innumerable expressions have received their vivid tints from the beautiful dyes of Roman and Grecian roots. If scholars, therefore, do not write our language with ease, or purity, or elegance, the cause must lie somewhat deeper than a conjectural ignorance of its true diction.

But I am prepared to yield still more to the force of the objection. I do not deny, that a language may be built up without the aid of any foreign materials, and be at once flexible for speech and graceful for composition. That the literature of a nation may be splendid and instructive, full of interest and beauty in thought and in diction, which has no kindred with classical learning ; that in the vast stream of time it may run its own current unstained by the admixture of surrounding languages ; that it may realize the ancient fable, “ Doris amara suam non intermisceat undam ;” that it may retain its own flavour, and its own bitter saltness too. But I do deny, that such a national literature does in fact exist in modern Europe, in that community of nations, of which we form a part, and to whose fortunes and pursuits in literature and arts we are bound by all our habits, and feelings, and interests. There is not a single nation from the North to the South of Europe, from the bleak shores of the Baltic to the bright plains of immortal Italy, whose literature is not embedded in the very elements of clas-

sical learning. The literature of England is in an emphatic sense the production of her scholars ; of men, who have cultivated letters in her universities, and colleges, and grammar schools ; of men, who thought any life too short, chiefly, because it left some relic of antiquity unmastered, and any other fame humble, because it faded in the presence of Roman and Grecian genius. He, who studies English literature without the lights of classical learning loses half the charms of its sentiments and style, of its force and feelings, of its delicate touches, of its delightful allusions, of its illustrative associations. Who, that reads the poetry of Gray, does not feel, that it is the refinement of classical taste, which gives such inexpressible vividness and transparency to his diction ? Who that reads the concentrated sense and melodious versification of Dryden and Pope, does not perceive in them the disciples of the old school, whose genius was inflamed by the heroic verse, the terse satire, and the playful wit of antiquity ? Who that meditates over the strains of Milton, does not feel, that he drank deep

—At “ Siloa’s brook, that flow’d
Fast by the oracle of God”—

hat the fires of his magnificent mind were lighted by coals from ancient altars ?

It is no exaggeration to declare, that he, who proposes to abolish classical studies, proposes to render in a great measure inert and unedifying the mass of English literature for three centuries ; to rob us of much of the glory of the past, and much of the instruction of future ages ; to blind us to excellences, which few may hope to equal, and none to surpass ; to annihilate associations, which are interwoven with our best sentiments, and give to distant times and countries a presence and reality, as if they were in fact our own.

There are dangers of another sort, which beset the literature of the age. The constant demand for new works and the impatience for fame, not only stimulate authors to an undue eagerness for strange incidents, singular opinions, and vain sentimentalities, but their style and dic-

tion are infected with the faults of extravagance and affectation. The old models of fine writing and good taste are departed from, not because they can be excelled, but because they are known, and want freshness; because, if they have a finished colouring, they have no strong contrasts to produce effect. The consequence is, that opposite extremes in the manner of composition prevail at the same moment, or succeed each other with a fearful rapidity. On one side are to be found authors, who profess to admire the easy flow and simplicity of the old style, the naturalness of familiar prose, and the tranquil dignity of higher compositions. But in their desire to be simple, they become extravagantly loose and inartificial; in their familiarity, feeble and drivelling; and in their more aspiring efforts, cold, abstract, and harsh. On the other side, there are those, who have no love for polished perfection of style, for sustained and unimpassioned accuracy, for persuasive, but equable diction. They require more hurried tones, more stirring spirit, more glowing and irregular sentences. There must be intensity of thought and intensity of phrase at every turn. There must be bold and abrupt transitions, strong relief, vivid colouring, forcible expression. If these are present, all other faults are forgiven, or forgotten. Excitement is produced, and taste may slumber.

Examples of each sort may be easily found in our miscellaneous literature among minds of no ordinary cast. Our poetry deals less than formerly with the sentiments and feelings belonging to ordinary life. It has almost ceased to be didactic, and in its scenery and descriptions reflects too much the peculiarities and morbid visions of eccentric minds. How little do we see of the simple beauty, the chaste painting, the unconscious moral grandeur of Crabbe and Cowper? We have, indeed, successfully dethroned the heathen deities. The Muses are no longer invoked by every unhappy inditer of verse. The Naiads no longer inhabit our fountains, nor the Dryads our woods. The River Gods no longer rise, like old father Thames,

“ And the hush'd waves glide softly to the shore.”

In these respects our poetry is more true to nature, and more conformable to just taste. But it still insists too much on extravagant events, characters, and passions, far removed from common life, and farther removed from general sympathy. It seeks to be wild, and fiery, and startling ; and sometimes, in its caprices, low and childish. It portrays natural scenery, as if it were always in violent commotion. It describes human emotions, as if man were always in extacies or horrors. Whoever writes for future ages must found himself upon feelings and sentiments belonging to the mass of mankind. Whoever paints from nature will rarely depart from the general character of repose impressed upon her scenery, and will prefer truth to the ideal sketches of the imagination.

Our prose too has a tendency to become somewhat too ambitious and intense. Even in newspaper discussions of the merits or misdeeds of rulers, there is a secret dread of neglect, unless the page gives out the sententious pungency or sarcastic scorn of Junius. Familiar, idiomatic prose seems less attractive than in former times. Yet one would suppose, that we might follow with safety the unaffected purity of Addison in criticism, and the graceful ease of Goldsmith in narrative. The neat and lively style of Swift loses nothing of its force by the simplicity, with which it aims to put "proper words in proper places." The correspondence of Cowper is not less engaging, because it utters no cant phrases, no sparkling conceits, and no pointed repartees.

But these faults may be considered as temporary, and are far from universal. There is another, however, which is more serious and important in its character, and is the common accompaniment of success. It is the strong temptation of distinguished authors to premature publication of their labours, to hasty and unfinished sketches, to fervid but unequal efforts. He, who writes for immortality, must write slowly, and correct freely. It is not the applause of the present day, or the deep interest of a temporary topic, or the consciousness of great powers, or the striking-off of a vigorous discourse, which will ensure a favourable verdict from posterity. It was

a beautiful remark of Sir Joshua Reynolds, "that great works, which are to live, and stand the criticism of posterity, are not performed at a heat." "I remember," said he, "when I was at Rome, looking at the fighting gladiator, in company with an eminent sculptor, and I expressed my admiration of the skill with which the whole is composed, and the minute attention of the artist to the change of every muscle in that momentary exertion of strength. He was of opinion, that a work so perfect, required nearly the whole life of man to perform." What an admonition! What a melancholy reflection to those, who deem the literary fame of the present age the best gift to posterity. How many of our proudest geniuses have written, and continue to write with a swiftness, which almost rivals the operations of the press. How many are urged on to the ruin of their immortal hopes by that public favour, which receives with acclamations every new offspring of their pen. If Milton had written thus, we should have found no scholar of our day, no "Christian Examiner,"* portraying the glory of his character with the enthusiasm of a kindred spirit. If Pope had written thus, we should have had no fierce contests respecting his genius and poetical attainments by our Byrons, and Bowleses, and Roscoes. If Virgil had written thus, he might have chanted his verses to the courtly Augustus; but Marcellus and his story would have perished. If Horace had written thus, he might have enchanted gay friends and social parties; but it would never have been said of his composition, *deicies repetita placebit*.

Such are some of the considerations, which have appeared to me fit to be addressed to you on the present occasion. It may be, that I have overrated their importance, and I am not unconscious of the imperfections of my own execution of the task.

To us, Americans, nothing, indeed, can, or ought to

* This refers to Dr. Channing. His essay on the writings of Milton was originally published in the "Christian Examiner," a Boston periodical.

be indifferent, that respects the cause of science and literature. We have taken a stand among the nations of the earth, and have successfully asserted our claim to political equality. We possess an enviable elevation, so far as concerns the structure of our government, our political policy, and the moral energy of our institutions. If we are not without rivals in these respects, we are scarcely behind any, even in the general estimate of foreign nations themselves. But our claims are far more extensive. We assert an equality of voice and vote in the republic of letters, and assume for ourselves the right to decide on the merits of others, as well as to vindicate our own. These are lofty pretensions, which are never conceded without proofs, and are severely scrutinized, and slowly admitted by the grave judges in the tribunal of letters. We have not placed ourselves as humble aspirants, seeking our way to higher rewards under the guardianship of experienced guides. We ask admission into the temple of fame, as joint heirs of the inheritance, capable in the manhood of our strength of maintaining our title. We contend for prizes with nations, whose intellectual glory has received the homage of centuries. France, Italy, Germany, England, can point to the past for monuments of their genius and skill, and to the present with the undimmed confidence of veterans. It is not for us to retire from the ground, which we have chosen to occupy, nor to shut our eyes against the difficulties of maintaining it. It is not by a few vain boasts, or vainer self-complacency, or rash daring, that we are to win our way to the first literary distinction. We must do as others have done before us. We must serve in the hard school of discipline ; we must invigorate our powers by the studies of other times. We must guide our footsteps by those stars, which have shone, and still continue to shine with inextinguishable light in the firmament of learning. Nor have we any reason for despondency. There is that in American character, which has never yet been found unequal to its purpose. There is that in American enterprise, which shrinks not, and faints not, and fails not in its labours. We may say with honest pride,—

“ *Man* is the nobler growth our realms supply,
And *souls* are ripen’d in our Northern sky.”

We may not then shrink from a rigorous examination of our own deficiencies in science and literature. If we have but a just sense of our wants, we have gained half the victory. If we but face our difficulties, they will fly before us. Let us not discredit our just honours by exaggerating little attainments. There are those in other countries, who can keenly search out, and boldly expose every false pretension. There are those in our own country, who would scorn a reputation ill founded in fact, and ill sustained by examples. We have solid claims upon the affection and respect of mankind. Let us not jeopard them by a false shame, or an ostentatious pride. The growth of two hundred years is healthy, lofty, expansive. The roots have shot deep and far; the branches are strong, and broad. I trust that many, many centuries to come will witness the increase and vigour of the stock. Never, never, may any of our posterity have just occasion to speak of our country in the expressiveness of Indian rhetoric, “ It is an aged hemlock; it is dead at the top.”

I repeat it, we have no reason to blush for what we have been, or what we are. But we shall have much to blush for, if, when the highest attainments of the human intellect are within our reach, we surrender ourselves to an obstinate indifference, or shallow mediocrity; if, in our literary career, we are content to rank behind the meanest principality of Europe. Let us not waste our time in seeking for apologies for our ignorance, where it exists, or in framing excuses to conceal it. Let our short reply to all such suggestions be, like the answer of a noble youth on another occasion, that we know the fact, and are every day getting the better of it. What, then, may I be permitted to ask, are our attainments in science and literature, in comparison with those of other nations in our age? I do not ask, if we have fine scholars, accomplished divines, and skilful physicians. I do not ask, if we have lawyers, who might excite a generous

rivalry in Westminster Hall. I do not ask, if we have statesmen, who would stand side by side with those of the old world in foresight, in political wisdom, in effective debate. I do not ask, if we have mathematicians, who may claim kindred with the distinguished of Europe. I do not ask, if we have historians, who have told with fidelity and force the story of our deeds and our sufferings. I do not ask, if we have critics, and poets, and philologists, whose compositions add lustre to the age. I know full well, that there are such. But they stand, as light-houses on the coasts of our literature, shining with a cheering brightness, it is true, but too often at distressing distances.

In almost every department of knowledge, the land of our ancestors annually pours forth from its press many volumes, the results of deep research, of refined taste, and of rich and various learning. The continent of Europe, too, burns with a generous zeal for science, even in countries, where the free exercise of thought is prohibited, and a stinted poverty presses heavily on the soul of enterprise. Our own contributions to literature are useful and creditable ; but it can rarely be said, that they belong to the highest class of intellectual effort. We have but recently entered upon classical learning for the purpose of cultivating its most profound studies, while Europe may boast of thousands of scholars engaged in this pursuit. The universities of Cambridge and Oxford count more than eight thousand students trimming their classical lamps, while we have not a single university, whose studies profess to be extensive enough to educate a Heyne, a Bentley, a Porson, or a Parr. There is not, perhaps, a single library in America sufficiently copious to have enabled Gibbon to verify the authorities for his immortal History of the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire. Our advances in divinity and law are probably as great, as in any branch of knowledge. Yet, until a late period, we never aspired to a deep and critical exposition of the Scriptures. We borrowed from Germany and England nearly all our materials, and are just struggling for the higher rewards of biblical learning. And

in law, where our eminence is least of all questionable, there are those among us, who feel, that sufficient of its learning, and argument, and philosophy remains unmastered, to excite the ambition of the foremost advocates.

Let me not be misunderstood. I advert to these considerations, not to disparage our country, or its institutions, or its means of extensive, I had almost said, of universal education. But we should not deceive ourselves with the notion, that, because education is liberally provided for, the highest learning is within the scope of that education. Our schools neither aim at, nor accomplish such objects. There is not a more dangerous error than that, which would soothe us into indolence, by encouraging the belief, that our literature is all it can, or ought to be; that all beyond is shadowy and unsubstantial, the vain theories of the scientific, or the reveries of mere scholars. The admonition, which addresses itself to my countrymen respecting their deficiencies, ought to awaken new energy to overcome them. They are accustomed to grapple with difficulties. They should hold nothing, which human genius or human enterprise has yet attained, as beyond their reach. The motto on their literary banner should be, *Nec timeo, nec sperno*. I have no fears for the future. It may not be our lot to see our celebrity in letters rival that of our public polity and free institutions. But the time cannot be far distant. It is scarcely prophecy to declare, that our children must and will enjoy it. They will see, not merely the breathing marble, and the speaking picture among their arts, but science and learning every where paying a voluntary homage to American genius.

There is, indeed, enough in our past history to flatter our pride, and encourage our exertions. We are of the lineage of the Saxons, the countrymen of Bacon, Locke and Newton, as well as of Washington, Franklin, and Fulton. We have read the history of our forefathers. They were men full of piety, and zeal, and an unconquerable love of liberty. They also loved human learning, and deemed it second only to divine. Here, on this very spot, in the bosom of the wilderness, within ten short

years after their voluntary exile, in the midst of cares, and privations, and sufferings, they found time to rear a little school, and dedicate it to God and the church. It has grown ; it has flourished ; it is the venerable university, to whose walls her grateful children annually come with more than filial affection. The sons of such ancestors can never dishonour their memories ; the pupils of such schools can never be indifferent to the cause of letters.

There is yet more in our present circumstances to inspire us with a wholesome consciousness of our powers, and our destiny. We have just passed the Jubilee of our Independence, and witnessed the prayers and gratitude of millions ascending to Heaven for our public and private blessings. That independence was the achievement, not of faction and ignorance, but of hearts as pure, and minds as enlightened, and judgments as sound, as ever graced the annals of mankind. Among the leaders were statesmen and scholars, as well as heroes and patriots. We have followed many of them to the tomb, blest with the honours of their country. We have been privileged yet more ; we have lived to witness an almost miraculous event in the departure of two great authors of our independence on that memorable and blessed day of Jubilee.

I may not in this place presume to pronounce the funeral panegyric of these extraordinary men. It has been already done by some of the master spirits of our country, by men worthy of the task, worthy as Pericles to pronounce the honours of the Athenian dead. It was the beautiful saying of the Grecian orator, that "this whole earth is the sepulchre of illustrious men. Nor is it the inscriptions on the columns in their native soil alone, that show their merit ; but the memorial of them, better than all inscriptions, in every foreign nation, reposed more durably in universal remembrance, than on their own tomb."

Such is the lot of Adams and Jefferson. They have lived, not for themselves, but for their country ; not for their country alone, but for the world. They belong to

history, as furnishing some of the best examples of disinterested and successful patriotism. They belong to posterity, as the instructors of all future ages in the principles of rational liberty, and the rights of the people. They belong to us of the present age by their glory, by their virtues, and by their achievements. These are memorials, which can never perish. They will brighten with the lapse of time, and, as they loom on the ocean of eternity, will seem present to the most distant generations of men. That voice of more than Roman eloquence, which urged and sustained the Declaration of independence, that voice, whose first and whose last accents were for his country, is indeed mute. It will never again rise in defence of the weak against popular excitement, and vindicate the majesty of law and justice. It will never again awaken a nation to arms to assert its liberties. It will never again instruct the public councils by its wisdom. It will never again utter its almost oracular thoughts in philosophical retirement. It will never again pour out its strains of parental affection, and in the domestic circle, give new force and fervour to the consolations of religion. The hand, too, which inscribed the Declaration of independence is indeed laid low. The weary head reposes on its mother earth. The mountain winds sweep by the narrow tomb, and all around has the loneliness of desolation. The stranger guest may no longer visit that hospitable home, and find him there, whose classical taste and various conversation lent a charm to every leisure hour; whose bland manners and social simplicity made every welcome doubly dear; whose expansive mind commanded the range of almost every art and science; whose political sagacity, like that of his illustrious coadjutor, read the fate and interests of nations, as with a second sight, and scented the first breath of tyranny in the passing gale; whose love of liberty, like his, was inflexible, universal, supreme; whose devotion to their common country, like his, never faltered in the worst, and never wearied in the best of times; whose public services ended but with life, carrying the long line of their illumination over sixty years; whose last thoughts

exhibited the ruling passion of his heart, enthusiasm in the cause of education ; whose last breathing committed his soul to God, and his offspring to his country.

Yes, Adams and Jefferson are gone from us for ever—gone, as a sunbeam to revisit its native skies—gone, as this mortal to put on immortality. Of them, of each of them, every American may exclaim ;

“ Ne'er to the chambers, where the mighty rest,
Since their foundation, came a nobler guest,
Nor e'er was to the bowers of bliss convey'd
A fairer spirit, or more welcome shade.”

We may not mourn over the departure of such men. We should rather hail it as a kind dispensation of Providence, to affect our hearts with new and livelier gratitude. They were not cut off in the blossom of their days, while yet the vigour of manhood flushed their cheeks, and the harvest of glory was ungathered. They fell not, as martyrs fall, seeing only in dim perspective the salvation of their country. They lived to enjoy the blessings, earned by their labours, and to realize all, which their fondest hopes had desired. The infirmities of life stole slowly and silently upon them, leaving still behind a cheerful serenity of mind. In peace, in the bosom of domestic affection, in the hallowed reverence of their countrymen, in the full possession of their faculties they wore out the last remains of life, without a fear to cloud, with scarcely a sorrow to disturb its close. The joyful day of our Jubilee came over them with its refreshing influence. To them, indeed, it was “ a great and good day.” The morning sun shone with softened lustre on their closing eyes. Its evening beams played lightly on their brows, calm in all the dignity of death. Their spirits escaped from these frail tenements without a struggle or a groan. Their death was gentle as an infant’s sleep. It was a long, lingering twilight, melting into the softest shade.

Fortunate men, so to have lived, and so to have died. Fortunate, to have gone hand in hand in the deeds of the revolution. Fortunate, in the generous rivalry of middle life. Fortunate, in deserving and receiving the

highest honours of their country. Fortunate in old age to have rekindled their ancient friendship with a holier flame. Fortunate, to have passed through the dark valley of the shadow of death together. Fortunate, to be indissolubly united in the memory and affections of their countrymen. Fortunate, above all, in an immortality of virtuous fame, on which history may with severe simplicity write the dying encomium of Pericles, "No citizen, through their means, ever put on mourning."

I may not dwell on this theme. It has come over my thoughts, and I could not wholly suppress the utterance of them. It was my principal intention to hold them up to my countrymen, not as statesmen, and patriots, but as scholars, as lovers of literature, as eminent examples of the excellence of the union of ancient learning with modern philosophy. Their youth was disciplined in classical studies ; their active life was instructed by the prescriptive wisdom of antiquity ; their old age was cheered by its delightful reminiscences. To them belongs the fine panegyric of Cicero, "Erant in *eis* plurimæ litteræ, nec *eæ* vulgares, sed interiores quædam, et reconditæ ; divina memoria, summa verborum et gravitas et elegantia ; atque *hæc* omnia vitæ decorabat dignitas et integritas."

I will ask your indulgence only for a moment longer. Since our last anniversary death has been unusually busy in thinning our numbers. I may not look on the right, or the left, without missing some of those, who stood by my side in my academic course, in the happy days spent within yonder venerable walls.

"These are counsellors, that feelingly persuade us what *we are*," and what we must be. Shaw and Salisbury are no more. The one, whose modest worth and ingenuous virtue adorned a spotless life ; the other, whose social kindness and love of letters made him welcome in every circle. But, what shall I say of Haven, with whom died a thousand hopes, not of his friends and family alone, but of his country. Nature had given him a strong and brilliant genius ; and it was chastened and invigorated by grave, as well as elegant studies. Whatever belonged to human manners and pursuits, to human interests and feel-

ings, to government, or science, or literature, he endeavoured to master with a scholar's diligence and taste. Few men have read so much, or so well. Few have united such manly sense with such attractive modesty. His thoughts and his style, his writings and his actions, were governed by a judgment, in which energy was combined with candour, and benevolence with deep, unobtrusive, and fervid piety. His character may be summed up in a single line, for there

“ was given
To Haven every virtue under Heaven.”

He had just arrived at the point of his professional career, in which skill and learning begin to reap their proper reward. He was in possession of the principal blessings of life, of fortune, of domestic love, of universal respect. There are those, who had fondly hoped, when they should have passed away, he might be found here to pay a humble tribute to their memory. To Providence it has seemed fit to order otherwise, that it might teach us “ what shadows we are, and what shadows we pursue.” We may not mourn over such a loss, as those, who are without hope. That life is not too short, which has accomplished its highest destiny ; that spirit may not linger here, which is purified for immortality.



DISCOURSES

ON

THE PROGRESS

OF

SCIENCE AND LITERATURE.

BY

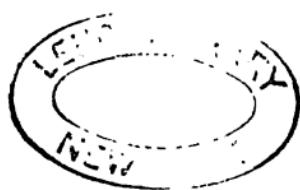
THE HON. JOSEPH STORY, LL. D.

ONE OF THE JUDGES OF THE SUPREME COURT OF THE
UNITED STATES.

EDINBURGH:

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MDCCXXXVI.



JAMES BURNET, PRINTER, 5, SHAKSPEARE SQUARE.

DISCOURSE II.*

MUCH has been said respecting the spirit of our age, and the improvements, by which it is characterized. Many learned discussions have been presented to the public, with a view to illustrate this topic; to open the nature and extent of our attainments; to contrast them with those of former times; and thus to vindicate, nay more, to demonstrate, our superiority over all our predecessors, if not in genius, at least in the perfection and variety of its fruits. There is, doubtless, much in such a review to gratify our pride, national, professional, and personal. But its value in this respect, if we stop here, is but of doubtful, or, at most, of subordinate importance. It is not the sum of our attainments, but the actual augmentation of human happiness and human virtue thereby, of which we may justly be proud. If every new acquisition operates, as a moving spirit upon the still depths of our minds, to awaken new enterprise and activity, to warm our hearts to new affection and kindness to our race, and to enable us to add something to the capital stock of human enjoyment, we may well indulge in self-congratulation. It has been said, that he who makes two blades of grass grow, where only one grew before, deserves to be reckoned among the benefactors of mankind. And it

* Delivered before the Boston Mechanics' Institute, at the opening of their annual course of lectures, November, 1829.

has been justly said; because he has added so much means to the support of life, and thus promoted the effective power and prosperity of the whole community. The true test of the value of all attainments is their real utility.

I do not mean by this remark to suggest, that nothing is to be esteemed valuable, except its utility can be traced directly home to some immediate benefit, in visible operation, as an effect from a cause. Far otherwise. There are many employments, whose chief object seems little connected with any great ultimate benefit, which yet administer widely, though indirectly, to the substantial good of society. There are many studies, which seem remote from any direct utility, which yet, like the thousand hidden springs, which form the sources and streams of rivers, pour in their contributions to augment the constantly increasing current of public wealth and happiness. We must not, therefore, when we examine an art, or an invention, a book, or a building, a study, or a curiosity, measure its value by a narrow rule. We must not ask ourselves, whether we could do without it; whether it be indispensable to our wants; or, whether, though missed, it could yet be spared. But the true question in such cases ought to be, whether, in the actual structure of society, it gratifies a reasonable desire, imparts an innocent pleasure, strengthens a moral feeling, elevates a single virtue, or chastens or refines the varied intercourse of life. If it does, it is still useful in the truest sense of the term, although it may not seem directly to feed the hungry, cure the sick, administer consolation to the afflicted, or even remove the irksome doubt of a poor litigant, groping blindfold through the dark passages of the law.

It is not easy, indeed, to name many pursuits, of which the inutility is so clearly made out, that they may be parted with without regret, or without disturbing the good order and arrangements of society. Some, that at a short sight seem, if not frivolous, at least unnecessary, to men of narrow capacities, will be found, on a larger survey, to be connected with the most important interests.

The fine arts, for instance, painting, music, poetry, sculpture, architecture, seem almost the necessary accompaniments of a state of high civilization. They are not only the grace and ornament of society, but they are intimately connected with its solid comforts. If they did no more than gratify our taste, increase our circle of innocent enjoyment, warm our imaginations, or refine our feelings, they might fairly be deemed public blessings. But who is so careless, as not to perceive, that they not only give encouragement to men of genius, but employment to whole classes in the subordinate arts? They not only create a demand for labour; but make that very labour a means of subsistence to many, who must otherwise be idle and indolent, or, by pressing upon other business, sink the compensation for labour, by a ruinous competition, to its minimum price. How many thousands are employed upon a single block of marble, before, under the forming hand of the artist, it breathes in sculptured life! before it meets us in the surpassing beauty of a *Venus*, or the startling indignation of an *Apollo*? Our granite would have slumbered for ever in its quarries, if architecture had not, under the guidance of taste, taught us to rear the dome, and the temple, the church of religion, and the hall of legislation, the column of triumph, and the obelisk of sorrow. To what an amazing extent are the daily operations of the press! With how many arts, with how much commerce, with what various manufactures, is it combined! The paper may be made of the linen of Italy, and the cotton of Carolina, or Egypt, or the Indies; the type and ink of the products of various climes; and the text must be composed, and the sheets worked off, by the care and diligence of many minds. And yet, if no books were to be printed, if no newspaper or pamphlet were to be struck off, but what were indispensable; if we were to deem all classical learning useless; and all poetry, and fiction, and dissertation, and essay, and history, a sad abuse of time and labour and ingenuity, because we could do without them, and because they did not plant our fields, or turn our mills, or sail our ships; I fear, that the race of

authors would soon become extinct ; and the press, busy, as it now is, with its myriads, would sink back into the silence of the days of Faustus, and require no aid from the supernatural arts of his suspected coadjutor. Sure I am, that the power-press of your own Treadwell, that beautiful specimen of skill and ingenuity, would be powerless, and no longer in its magical works delight us, in our morning search, or in our evening lucubrations.

I have made these suggestions, not so much as appropriate to the objects, which I have in view in this address, as to guard against the supposition in what follows, that the liberal arts are not worthy of our most intense admiration and respect.

If I were called upon to state that, which, upon the whole, is the most striking characteristic of our age, that, which in the largest extent exemplifies its spirit, I should unhesitatingly answer, that it is the superior attachment to practical science over merely speculative science. Into whatever department of knowledge we may search, we shall find, that the almost uniform tendency of the last fifty years has been to deal less and less with theory, and to confine the attention more and more to practical results. There was a period, when metaphysical inquiries constituted the principal delight of scholars and philosophers ; and endless were the controversies and the subtleties, about which they distracted themselves and their followers. The works of Aristotle, one of the greatest geniuses of all antiquity, were studied with a diligence, which will hardly be believed in our day ; and exerted an influence over the minds of men, almost down to the close of the seventeenth century, as wonderful, as it was universal. He was read, not in what would now be deemed most important, in his researches into natural history, and the phenomena of the external world, or in his dissertations on politics, and government, and literature ; but in his metaphysics, and endless inquiries into mind, and spirit, and essences, and forms, and categories, and syllogisms.

Lord Bacon, two centuries ago, in some most profound discourses, exposed the absurdity of the existing system

of study, and of its unsatisfactory aims and results. He vindicated the necessity of inquiring into mental, as well as natural phenomena, by other means ; by what is called the method of induction, that is, by a minute examination of facts, or what may properly be called experimental philosophy. This, in his judgment, was the only safe and sure road to the attainment of science ; and, by subjecting every theory to the severe test of facts, would save a useless consumption of time and thought upon vague and visionary projects.

It may seem strange, that such wise counsels should not have been listened to with immediate, if not universal approbation. The progress, however, even of the most salutary truths is slow, when there are no artificial obstacles in the way. But when men's minds are pre-occupied by systems and pursuits, which have received the sanction of many generations, every effort to overcome errors is like the effort to carry an enemy's fortress. It can rarely be accomplished by storm. It must be subdued by patient mining, by a gradual destruction of out-posts, and by advances under cover of powerful batteries. Lord Bacon's admonitions can scarcely be said to have gained any general credence until the close of the seventeenth century ; and their triumphant adoption was reserved as the peculiar glory of our own day.

It is to this cause, that we are mainly to attribute the comparatively slight attention at first paid to discoveries, which have since become some of the most productive sources, not only of individual opulence, but, in a large sense, of national wealth. The history of the steam-engine is full of instruction upon this subject. The Marquis of Worcester, early in the reign of Charles II. (1655), first directed the attention of the public to the expansive power of steam, when used in a close vessel ; and of its capacity to be employed as a moving power in machinery. The suggestion slept almost without notice, until about the year 1698, when Capt. Savary, a man of singular ingenuity, constructed an apparatus, for which he obtained a patent, to apply it to practical purposes. The invention of a safety-valve soon afterwards followed ; and

that again was succeeded by the use of a close-fitted piston, working in a cylinder. Still, however, the engine was comparatively of little use, until Mr. Watt, a half century afterwards, effected the grand improvement of condensing the steam in a separate vessel, communicating by a pipe with the cylinder; and Mr. Washbrough, in 1778, by the application of it to produce a rotatory motion, opened the most extensive use of it for mechanical purposes.

It was in reference to the astonishing impulse thus given to mechanical pursuits, that Dr. Darwin, more than forty years ago, broke out in strains equally remarkable for their poetical enthusiasm and prophetic truth, and predicted the future triumph of the steam-engine.

“ Soon shall thy arm, unconquered steam, afar
 Drag the slow barge, or drive the rapid car ;
 Or on wide waving wings expanded bear
 The flying chariot through the fields of air ;—
 Fair crows triumphant, leaning from above,
 Shall wave their fluttering kerchiefs, as they move,
 Or warrior bands alarm the gaping crowd,
 And armies shrink beneath the shadowy cloud.”

What would he have said, if he had but lived to witness the immortal invention of Fulton, which seems almost to move in the air, and to fly on the wings of the wind? And yet how slowly did this enterprise obtain the public favour! I myself have heard the illustrious inventor relate, in an animated and affecting manner, the history of his labours and discouragements. When (said he) I was building my first steam-boat at New York, the project was viewed by the public either with indifference or with contempt, as a visionary scheme. My friends, indeed, were civil, but they were shy. They listened with patience to my explanations, but with a settled cast of incredulity on their countenances. I felt the full force of the lamentation of the poet,

“ Truths would you teach, or save a sinking land ?
 All fear, none aid you, and few understand.”

As I had occasion to pass daily to and from the building-
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yard, while my boat was in progress, I have often loitered unknown near the idle groups of strangers, gathering in little circles, and heard various inquiries as to the object of this new vehicle. The language was uniformly that of scorn, or sneer, or ridicule. The loud laugh often rose at my expense; the dry jest; the wise calculation of losses and expenditures; the dull, but endless, repetition of the Fulton Folly. Never did a single encouraging remark, a bright hope, or a warm wish, cross my path. Silence itself was but politeness, veiling its doubts, or hiding its reproaches. At length the day arrived, when the experiment was to be put into operation. To me it was a most trying and interesting occasion. I invited many friends to go on board to witness the first successful trip. Many of them did me the favour to attend, as a matter of personal respect; but it was manifest, that they did it with reluctance, fearing to be the partners of my mortification, and not of my triumph. I was well aware, that in my case there were many reasons to doubt of my own success. The machinery was new and ill made; many parts of it were constructed by mechanics unaccustomed to such work; and unexpected difficulties might reasonably be presumed to present themselves from other causes. The moment arrived, in which the word was to be given for the vessel to move. My friends were in groups on the deck. There was anxiety, mixed with fear, among them. They were silent, and sad, and weary. I read in their looks nothing but disaster, and almost repented of my efforts. The signal was given, and the boat moved on a short distance, and then stopped, and became immovable. To the silence of the preceding moment now succeeded murmurs of discontent, and agitations, and whispers, and shrugs. I could hear distinctly repeated, "I told you it would be so—it is a foolish scheme—I wish we were well out of it." I elevated myself upon a platform, and addressed the assembly. I stated, that I knew not what was the matter; but if they would be quiet, and indulge me for a half hour, I would either go on, or abandon the voyage for that time. This short respite was conceded without objection. I went below,

examined the machinery, and discovered that the cause was a slight mal-adjustment of some of the work. In a short period it was obviated. The boat was again put in motion. She continued to move on. All were still incredulous. None seemed willing to trust the evidence of their own senses. We left the fair city of New York ; we passed through the romantic and ever-varying scenery of the highlands ; we descried the clustering houses of Albany ; we reached its shores ; and then, even then, when all seemed achieved, I was the victim of disappointment. Imagination superseded the influence of fact. It was then doubted, if it could be done again ; or if done, it was doubted if it could be made of any great value.

Such was the history of the first experiment, as it fell, not in the very language which I have used, but in its substance, from the lips of the inventor. He did not live, indeed, to enjoy the full glory of his invention. It is mournful to say, that attempts were made to rob him, in the first place, of the merit of his invention, and, next, of its fruits. He fell a victim to his efforts to sustain his title to both. When already his invention had covered the waters of the Hudson, he seemed little satisfied with the results, and looked forward to far more extensive operations. My ultimate triumph, he used to say, my ultimate triumph will be on the Mississippi. I know, indeed, that, even now, it is deemed impossible by many, that the difficulties of its navigation can be overcome. But I am confident of success. I may not live to see it ; but the Mississippi will yet be covered by steam-boats ; and thus an entire change be wrought in the course of the internal navigation and commerce of our country.

And it has been wrought. And the steam-boat, looking to its effects upon commerce and navigation, to the combined influences of facilities of travelling and facilities of trade, of rapid circulation of news, and still more rapid circulation of pleasures and products, seems destined to be numbered among the noblest benefactions to the human race.

I have passed aside from my principal purpose, to give,
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in this history of the steam-boat, a slight illustration of the slow progress of inventions. It may not be unacceptable, as a tribute to the memory of a man, who united in himself a great love of science with an inextinguishable desire to render it subservient to the practical business of life.

But, perhaps, the science of chemistry affords as striking an instance as any, which can be adduced, of the value of Lord Bacon's maxims, and of the paramount importance of facts over mere speculative philosophy. It was formerly an occult science, full of mysteries and unedifying processes, abounding in theories, and scarcely reducible to any rational principles. It is now in the highest sense entitled to the appellation of a science. The laws of chemical action have been examined and ascertained with great accuracy, and can now be demonstrated with as much clearness and facility, as any of the laws which belong to mechanical philosophy. It has become eminently a practical science ; and its beneficial effects are felt in almost every department of life. The apothecary's shop no longer abounds with villainous compounds and nostrums, the disgrace of the art. Chemistry has largely administered to the convenience, as well as the efficacy, of medicines, by ascertaining their qualities and component parts, by removing nauseous substances, simplifying processes, and purifying the raw materials. It has secured the lives of thousands by its wonderful safety lamps, which prevent explosions from the invisible, but fatal fire-damps of mines. It lights our streets and theatres by its beautiful gas, extracted from coal. It enters our dye-houses, and teaches us how to fix and discharge colours, to combine and to separate them ; to bleach the brown fibre, and impart the never-fading tint. It discloses the nature and properties of light and heat, of air and water, of the products of the vegetable and animal kingdoms, of earths, and alkalies, and acids, and minerals, and metals. And, though we have not as yet discovered by it the philosopher's stone, or learned how to transmute all other substances into gold ; we have gained by it a much more valuable secret, the art of improving

our agriculture, perfecting our manufactures, and multiplying all our comforts, by giving new power to all the arts of life, and adding new vigour to home-bred industry. It has indeed conferred benefits, where they have been least expected. By expounding the origin and causes of *ignes fatui*, it has put to flight the whole host of goblins, and imps, and fairies, and sprites, that inhabited our low grounds and wastes, and required some holy incantation to lay them, in the good old days of superstition, and omens, and death watches, and ghosts, that vanished at the crowing of the cock. It may not, indeed, be said to have given much aid to the law, except when some luckless inventor has been driven into a tedious lawsuit by an infringement of his patent, and has found his money melt away under its dissolving power.

Half a century ago the composition of the atmosphere and ocean were unknown to philosophy. The identity of the electric fluid and lightning was scarcely established. The wonders disclosed by the galvanic battery had not even entered into the imagination of man.

It is unnecessary for me to trace the causes, which gradually led to these changes in the objects and pursuit of science. For a long period after the revival of letters, the minds of educated men were almost wholly engrossed by classical learning, and philology, and criticism, and dogmatical theology, and endless commentaries upon scanty texts, both in law and divinity. The study of pure and mixed mathematics succeeded; and astronomy, as it deserved, absorbed all the attention and genius, which were not devoted to literature. But scholars of all sorts, by general consent, looked with indifference or disdain upon the common arts of life, and felt it to be a reproach to mingle in the business of the artisan. One would suppose, that the alliance between science and the arts was so natural and immediate, that little influence would be necessary to bring about their union. But the laboratory and the workshop, the study of the geometricalian and the shed of the machinist, were for ages at almost immeasurable distances from each other; and the pathways between them were few, and little frequented.

It was not until some fortunate discoveries in the arts had led to opulence, that scientific men began to surrender their pride, and to devote themselves practically to the improvement of the arts. The first great step in modern science was to enter the work-shop, and superintend its operations, and analyze and explain its principles. And the benefits derived from this connection have already been incalculable both to art and science. Each has been astonishingly improved by the other; and a hint derived from one has often led on to a train of inventions and discoveries, the future results of which are beyond all human power to measure. Thus, dignity and importance have been added to both. The manufacturer, the machinist, the chemist, the engineer, who is eminent in his art, may now place himself by the side of the scholar, and the mathematician, and the philosopher, and find no churlish claim for precedence put in. His rank in society, with reference either to the value of the products of his skill, or the depth of his genius, sinks him not behind the foremost of those, who strive for the first literary distinctions. This fortunate change in the public opinion, which has made it not only profitable, but honourable, to pursue the mechanical arts, is already working deeply into all the elements of modern society. It has already accomplished, what it is scarcely a figure of speech to call, miracles in the arts. Who is there, that would not desire to rival, if he does not envy, the inventions of Watt, of Arkwright, and Fulton? Who would ask for a fairer reputation, or loftier or more enduring fame, than belongs to them? And yet we have but just entered on the threshold of the results, to which their labours must lead future generations. We can scarcely imagine the number of minds, which have been already stimulated to the pursuit of practical science by their successful example. Whichever way we turn, we may see minds of the first class diverted from the established professions of law, physic, and divinity, to become the votaries, nay, the enthusiastic votaries, of the arts. And we are beginning to realize the first effects of this intense application and appropriation of the genius of our

age, in simultaneous and elegant inventions in various arts.

It is true, in the general progress of society, that art commonly precedes science. The savage first constructs his hut, prepares his food, fashions his weapons of defence, and multiplies his power, by the application of the rudest materials. His wants being supplied, he may next dream of luxuries. But the road lies open to him, not by the investigation of principles, but by the application of manual dexterity and steady labour to acquire them. And this, for the most part, continues, or rather has continued, to be the order of things, until very late stages of civilization and refinement. At present, this order is almost entirely reversed. It may now be said with truth, that, in a general view, science precedes art ; that is, the improvements, which are made in art, arise more often from an exact investigation of principles, than from bare experiments, or accidental combinations. Principles suggest the experiment, rather than experiment the principles. In the most important branches of manufactures, where skill is so constantly in demand, and economy in operation is so indispensable, and competition is universal, there is now a perpetual tasking of the wit of man to invent some cheaper, thriftier, or neater combination. Something to increase the velocity and uniformity of motion, the delicacy and certainty of spinning, the beauty or fineness of fabrics, the simplicity or directness in the application of power, or something to ascertain and separate the worthless from the valuable in materials, is the ambition of a thousand minds at the same instant ; and the project holds out ample rewards to the fortunate discoverer. The result is, that the discovery is often simultaneously made by different minds at great distances, and without the slightest communication with each other. At other times, different inventions are at the same moment employed, and work out with rival skill the same purposes by opposite means. In this way, and especially in manufactures, the most perfect existing machinery is perpetually in danger of becoming useless, or at least unprofitable, by the introduction of a single improvement,

which gives it a superiority of one per centum upon the capital employed. An instance, illustrative of these remarks, occurred in the course of my own official duties, in a suit for the infringement of a patent right. A beautiful improvement had been made in the double-speeder of the cotton spinning machine, by one of our ingenious countrymen. The originality of the invention was established by the most satisfactory evidence. The defendant, however, called an Englishman, as a witness, who had been but a short time in the country, and who testified most explicitly to the existence of a like invention in the improved machinery in England. Against such positive proof there was much difficulty in proceeding. The testimony, though doubted, could not be discredited; and the trial was postponed to another term, for the purpose of procuring evidence to rebut it. An agent was despatched to England, for this and other objects; and, upon his return, the plaintiff was content to become nonsuited. There was no doubt, that the invention here was without any suspicion of its existence elsewhere; but the genius of each country, almost at the same moment, accomplished independently the same achievement.

I have introduced these considerations to the view of those, who are engaged in the arts, and especially of those, whose studies this society is designed to patronize, for the purpose of leading them to the reflection, that, in the present state of things, it is no longer safe to be ignorant; and that mere dexterity and mechanical adroitness, expertness of hand, or steadiness of labour, are not alone sufficient to guaranty to the individual a successful issue in his business. Science is becoming almost indispensable, in order to master improvements, as they occur, and to keep up, in some measure, with the skill of the age. It will otherwise happen, that a mechanic, by the time he has arrived mid-way in life, will find himself superseded by those, who, though much younger, have begun life under more favourable auspices. But upon this I may have occasion to enlarge a little more hereafter.

I have already spoken of the advantages resulting from scientific men's becoming familiar with the workshop, and

the operations of art. But a far more important object, and the second great step in improvement, is to elevate mechanics and artisans to the rank of scientific inquirers.

It is singular, that no attempt was ever made to provide systematically for such an object, until a period so recent, that it seems but an affair of yesterday. The truth is so obvious, that he, who is engaged in the practice of an art, must, with equal advantages, be far better qualified to improve and perfect its operations, than he, who merely theorizes, without any knowledge of practical difficulties, that it is matter of surprise, that it should have been so long overlooked. The origin and history of Mechanics' Institutions were brought before you, on the first opening of your own Institution, with so much fulness and accuracy, by the learned gentleman who addressed you on that occasion, that I may well be spared any effort to retouch, what he has so faithfully delineated. Until the nineteenth century, no one thought of a system of scientific instruction, much less of mutual instruction, for those who were to be bred in the arts. These institutions began, as you know, under the auspices of Professor Anderson, at Glasgow, and so slowly worked their way into public favour, that, ten years ago, they were unknown in that city, which boasts herself the modern Athens; and, seven years ago, all the influence and reputation of Dr. Birkbeck were requisite to introduce them into the reluctant circles of London.

I look upon this, as a new era in the history of science; and it may be safely predicted, that these establishments are destined hereafter to work more important changes, in the structure of society, and in the improvement of the arts, than any single event which has occurred since the invention of printing.

What I propose in the residue of this discourse is, to offer some considerations in vindication of this opinion, and also some considerations by way of encouragement to those, who, as mechanics and artisans, are invited to devote themselves to the pursuit of liberal science.

And, in the first place, I might remark, that genius and talent are limited to no rank or condition of life.

They have been distributed by the bounty of Providence, with an equal hand, through every class of society. They are among those gifts, which poverty cannot destroy, or wealth confer ; which spring up in the midst of discouragements and difficulties, and, like the power of steam, acquire new elasticity by pressure ; which ripen in the silence of solitude, as well as in the crowded walks of society ; which the cottage may nourish into a more healthy strength, than even the palace, or the throne. The most formidable enemy to genius is not labour, but indolence ; want of interest and excitement ; want of motive to warm, and of object to accomplish ; ignorance of means, leading to indifference to ends. Hence it is, that the very highest and the very lowest orders of society often present the same mental phenomena—a fixed and languishing disease of the intellectual powers, where curiosity wastes itself in trifles, and a cold listlessness, brooding over the thoughts, lets fall a preternatural stupor. Their misfortune is that, so beautifully touched by the poet,

“ But knowledge to their eyes her ample age,
Rich with the spoils of time, did ne’er unrul.”

I might remark, in the next place, that the rewards of science are most ample, whether they be viewed in reference to personal enjoyment, to rank in society, or to substantial wealth. It is one of the wise dispensations of Providence, that knowledge should not only confer power, but should also confer happiness. Every new attainment is a new source of pleasure ; and thus the desire for it increases as fast as it is gratified. It not only widens the sphere of our thoughts, but it elevates them, and thus gives them a livelier moral action. When one has seen an apple fall from a tree, and is told, for the first time, that its fall is regulated by the law of gravitation, the simplicity of the truth may scarcely awaken his curiosity. When he is told, that the same law regulates the plumb-line, and enables him unerringly to erect his house in the true perpendicular, he perceives, with pleasure, a

new application of it. When he is further told, that there is a constantly increasing rapidity in every descending body, by the same law, so that it falls in the second instant double the space it does in the first ; and that the whole doctrine of projectiles, both in nature and art, depends upon it ; that it governs the flow of rivers, and the fall of cataracts, and the gentle rains, and the gentler dews, and the invisible air ; that it guides the motion of the water-mill, the aim of gunnery, and the operations of the steam-engine ;—he cannot but awaken to some emotions of admiration. But when he has been taught, that the same law regulates the ebb and flow of the tide, the motions of the earth, and the planets, and the sun, and the stars, and holds them in their orbits, and binds them in an eternally revolving harmony ; that to this he owes the return of day and night, the changes of the seasons, seed-time and harvest, summer and winter ; if he be any thing, but a clod of the valley, how can he but exclaim, in wonder and amazement,

“ These, as they change, Almighty Father, these
Are but the varied God. The rolling year
Is full of thee.”

What can tend more to exalt the dignity of our nature, than the consideration, that the mind of man has not only been able to grasp and demonstrate this law, but to apply it to the solution of an infinite number of questions, apparently beyond the reach of his boldest efforts ? He has been able to ascertain the motions and size of the whole planetary system ; to calculate every perturbation, arising from the constant, but changeful influence of mutual gravitation ; to ascertain the paths of comets ; to calculate eclipses with unerring certainty ; and to foretel the very minute, nay, the very instant, of occultation of the most distant satellites. He can thus read, through the past, as well as the future, all the various states of the heavens, for thousands of years. He has been able to apply this knowledge to the noblest purposes ; and the mariner, by its aid, descries his home-port with the same

ease, on the dark bosom of the ocean, as he points it out from the little hill-top, that overlooks his native village.

If we pass from the contemplation of this sublime law of nature to others, which belong to animal or vegetable life, to those, which form and preserve the treasures of the earth, and of the sea, even down to those, which regulate the minutest particles of matter, the light of science will enable us every where to behold new and increasing wonders, and to remark the operations of infinite power, for ever varied, and yet for ever the same. It is impossible, that the mere perception of such laws should not afford pleasure to every rational mind. But when we further learn, that these very laws are made continually subservient to the use of man ; that, by the knowledge of them, he is enabled to create power, and perfect mechanical operations ; that he can make the winds and the waves, the earth and the air, heat and cold, the ductile metals and the solid rocks, the fragile flower and the towering forest, minister to his wants, his refinements, and his enterprise ; we are compelled to admit, that the capacity, to trace back such effects to their causes, must elevate, and enlarge, and invigorate the understanding.

There is also real dignity, as well as delight, in such studies ; and whenever they shall become the general accompaniment of mechanical employments, they must work a most beneficial change in the general structure of society. The arts of life are now so various and important, so intimately connected with national prosperity and individual comfort, that, for the future, a very large proportion of the population of every civilized country must be engaged in them. The time is not far distant, when the mechanic and manufacturing interest will form the great balancing power, between the conflicting interests of commerce and agriculture ; between the learned professions, and the mere proprietors of capital ; between the day-labourer, and the unoccupied man of ease. In proportion to the degree of the knowledge, which shall belong to this collective interest, in proportion as its industry shall be combined with science, will be its influence on the well-being and safety of society. It is of the

first importance, therefore, that education should here exert its most extensive power ; and, by elevating the morals, as well as stimulating the enterprise of artisans, give a triumph to intellect over mere physical force ; and thus secure one of the most dangerous passes of social life against the irruptions of ignorance and popular fury. It is a truth not always sufficiently felt, that science, while it elevates the objects of desire, has, in the same proportion, a tendency to restrain the outbreaks of the bad passions of mankind.

I might remark, in the next place, that the pursuit of practical science is not only a source of inexhaustible pleasure, opening new avenues to rank and reputation ; but it is, at the same time, one of the surest foundations of opulence. Mere mechanical labour, from the perpetual competition arising from an increasing population, has a natural tendency to descend in the scale of compensation. But this effect is astonishingly increased by the constant application of machinery, as a substitute for the labour of man. The perfection of machinery has, in this manner, at times, thrown whole classes of artisans out of employment, and compelled them to resort to new pursuits for support. Mere manual skill and dexterity are nothing, when put in competition with the regularity, rapidity, and economy of machinery, working under the guidance of science. Now, it must be obvious, that in proportion as an artisan possesses science, will be his facility in passing from one branch of an art to another ; and his ability to command a higher price for his services. His capacity, too, for adopting improvements, and keeping pace with the genius of the age, will (as has been already hinted) be thus immeasurably increased. So, that, in the narrowest and most limited view, there is a positive certainty of gain, by understanding the scientific principles of the art, which we profess.

But this would be a very inadequate view of the benefits arising from this source. It is the power of science, in awakening the dormant energy of genius ; in pointing out to it the true means to arrive at great ends ; in preventing it from being wasted in visionary schemes, or re-

tarded by clumsy processes; in short, it is the power of science, in suggesting the first hint, or striking out the first spark, or directing the unsteady aim, or removing the intermediate obstacles, that constitutes its true value, and perhaps its noblest excellence. Even after the first step is taken, and the first development of inventive genius assumes shape and body, how many obstacles are to be overcome; how many unexpected difficulties are to be met; how many toilsome days and nights are to be consumed, in nice adjustments, and minute alterations! It is here that science may be said to foster and nourish genius; to administer to its wants, and soothe its disquietudes, and animate its inquiries. What logarithms are to the mathematician, knowledge of principles is to the mechanic. It not only abridges the processes of computation, and thus diminishes labour, but it puts him in possession of means and computations, otherwise absolutely beyond the reach of human calculation. After Fulton had securely achieved, in his own opinion, the invention of the steam-boat, months were consumed by him, as I learned from his own lips, in making the necessary calculations upon the resistance of fluids, in order to ascertain what was the best form for the boat, to ensure a successful issue to his experiment. I myself, in the course of my judicial life, have had occasion to learn from witnesses the origin, and history, and gradual formation, of two of the most elegant inventions in our own country; and, in both instances, the original machine, rude, and unsightly, and cumbrous enough, was brought into court, as the best proof of the first sketch, compared with the last labours of the admirable inventors. I have not the least hesitation in saying, that, if either of those extraordinary minds had been originally instructed in the principles of mechanical science, half their labours would have been saved. Sure I am, that one of them would not, with his later acquirements in science, have laid aside, for a long time, the creation of his own genius, as if in despair; that it could ever attain maturity.

I allude to the card machine of Whittemore, and the nail machine of Perkins. Of the former it would not

become me to speak in terms of confident praise, from my own want of the proper knowledge of machinery. But I must confess, that, when I first saw it, it seemed to me to be almost an intelligent being, and to do every thing but speak ; and, whether considered with reference to the simplicity of its means, the accuracy and variety of its operations, or its almost universal capacity for common use, it deserves the highest commendation. Other inventions have since somewhat narrowed the sphere of its operations, and made its celebrity less felt. But I may quote the remark of one of our most ingenious countrymen, who, to a question put to him, what, after two months' examination of the patent office at Washington, and his own surveys elsewhere, appeared to him the most interesting of American inventions, unhesitatingly answered, Whittemore's card machine. The remark was made by Perkins ; and perhaps no person, but himself, would have thought, that his own nail machine, which with its toggle-joint consumes bars of iron, and returns them in nails, with the *tranquil grandeur* of a giant, conscious of superior power, might not have borne the most strenuous rivalry.

And this leads me to remark, in the next place, as matter of pride, as well as of encouragement, that to mechanics themselves we are indebted for some of the most useful and profitable inventions of our age. I have already adverted to the perfection of the steam-engine by Watt. The cotton-machine of Arkwright constitutes an era in inventions, and has already thrown back upon Asia all her various fabrics, and compelled her to yield up to European skill the cheapest labour of her cheapest population. The inventions of Wedgewood have led to almost as striking a rivalry of the pottery and wares of the East. The cotton-gin, which has given to the cotton-growing States of the south their present great staple, is the production of the genius of Whitney. In the year 1794, the Carolinas and Georgia were scarcely known to our ablest diplomatists, as cultivators of the plant ; so obscure and unimportant were its results. The invention of Whitney at once gave it the highest value ; and laid

the broad foundation of their present wealth and prosperity. At this very moment, New England annually consumes, in her manufactories, more than one-fifth part of the eight hundred and fifty thousand bales of cotton, the annual produce of their soil ; which, but for him, would have had no existence. What wonders were accomplished by the self-taught architect, Brindley, himself a humble mill-wright ; and yet of such vast compass of thought, that to him rivers seemed of no use, but to feed navigable canals, and the ocean itself but a large reservoir for water-works ! What effects is our own Perkins producing, by one only of his numerous inventions,—the art of softening steel, so as to admit of engraving, and then hardening it again, so as to retain the fine point and polish of copper-plate, without the constant wear of the latter, and its consequent tendency to depreciation ! He has enabled us, as it were, to stereotype, and multiply, to an almost incalculable extent, the most beautiful specimens of some of the fine arts ; and cheapen them, so as to bring them within the reach of the most moderate fortunes. Many other illustrious instances of genius, successfully applied to the improvement of the arts, might be selected from the workshops and common trades of life. But in most of these instances it will be found, that the discovery was not the mere result of accident, but arose from the patient study of principles, or from hints gathered from a scientific observation of nice and curious facts. And it may be added, that, in all these instances, in proportion as the inventors acquired a knowledge of the principles of the arts, their genius assumed a wider play, and accomplished its designs with more familiar power and certainty. It is a subject of most profound interest, to observe to what grand results a common principle in mechanics, or an apparently insulated fact, may conduct us, under the guidance of a man of genius. The rule, for instance, in geometry, that the circumferences of circles are in proportion to their diameters, lies at the foundation of most of the operations of practical mechanics, and has led to the means of increasing mechanical power to an almost incalculable extent. The lever,

the pulley, and the wheel, are but illustrations of it. So, too, the habit of nice observation of facts (the almost constant attendant upon scientific acquirements) has led to surprising conjectures, which have ended in the demonstration of equally surprising truths. Let me avail myself of one or two illustrations, which have been already noticed by others, as better to my purpose than any which my own memory could furnish. In the course of Sir Isaac Newton's experiments to ascertain the laws of optics, he was led, from the peculiar action of the diamond upon light, to express an opinion, that it was carbon, and capable of ignition, and not belonging to the class of crystals. That conjecture has in our day been established, by chemical experiments, to be a fact. He made the discovery, also, of the compound nature of light, and that its white colour arises from a mixture of all the various colours. This has led to various ingenious improvements in the formation of the lenses of telescopes, by which modern astronomy has been able to display the heavens in new beauty and order. When Franklin, by close observation, had established the identity of lightning with the electric spark, he was immediately led to the practical application of his discovery, by ascertaining the relative conducting power of various substances, so as to guard our dwellings from its tremendous agency. The galvanic battery, to which we are indebted for so many discoveries in chemistry, owes its origin to an apparently trivial circumstance. The discoverer's attention was drawn to an investigation of the cause of the twitching of a dead frog's leg; and by patient and laborious experiments, he was at length conducted to the discovery of animal electricity. The polarization of light, as it is called,—that is, the fact, that rays of light have different sides, which have different properties of reflection,—is a discovery in optics of very recent date, which, it is said, “is so fertile in the views it lays open of the constitution of natural bodies, and the minuter mechanism of the universe, as to place it in the very first rank of physical and mathematical science.” It was discovered by the French philosopher, Malus, as late as in 1810, by various minute

and delicate experiments, and has already led to very extraordinary results.

Indeed, such is the quickening power of science, that it is scarcely possible, that its simplest germ should be planted in the human mind, without expanding into a healthy growth. It generates, as it moves on, new thoughts, and new inquiries, and is for ever gathering, without exhaustion, and without satiety. The curiosity, which is once awakened by it, never sleeps ; the genius, which is once kindled at its altar, burns on with an inextinguishable flame.

It has been remarked, that such was the progress of astronomical science, and the number of minds engaged in it, towards the close of the seventeenth century, that, if Sir Isaac Newton had never lived, his splendid and invaluable discoveries must have been in the possession of the succeeding age. The approaches had been so near, that they almost touched the very verge of the paths, which his genius explored, and demonstrated with such matchless ability. If this be true in respect to that branch of physical science, it is far more strikingly true in respect to mechanics. The struggle here, in respect to priority of inventions, is often so very close, that a single day sometimes decides the controversy.

It is from considerations of this nature ;—that, what has been must continue to be ; that art is never perfect, and nature is inexhaustible ; that science, while it is the master of art, is itself ultimately dependent upon it ; that the intellectual power grows up in all stations, and in all soils ; that, all other circumstances equal, he, who knows and practises, must for ever take the lead of him, who merely knows, and has none of the skill to apply power, or the practical sagacity to overcome difficulties ; that he, whose interest is indissolubly connected with his science, and who feels, at every turn, the animating impulse of reward, as well as the pleasure of speculation, and the desire of fame, has more enduring and instant motives, for exertion, than he, who merely indulges his leisure, or his curiosity ;—it is, I say, from these considerations, that I deduce the conclusion, that, when arti-

sans and mechanics shall have become instructed in science, the inventions of this class will be more numerous, more useful, more profitable, and more ingenious, than those of any other class, and even perhaps of all other classes of society.

What an animating prospect does this afford ! What noble ends to poor, neglected, suffering genius ! What constant comfort, to cheer the hard hours of labour, and the heavier hours of despondency ! Much less of success in life is in reality dependent upon accident, or what is called luck, than is commonly supposed. Far more depends upon the objects, which a man proposes to himself ; what attainments he aspires to ; what is the circle, which bounds his vision and his thoughts ; what he chooses, *not to be educated for*, but to *educate himself for* ; whether he looks to the end and aim of the whole of life, or only to the present day or hour ; whether he listens to the voice of indolence or vulgar pleasure, or to the stirring voice in his own soul, urging his ambition on to the highest objects. If his views are low and grovelling ; if the workshop, in its cold routine of duties, bounds all his wishes and his hopes, his destiny is already fixed ; and the history of his whole life may be read, though the blush of youth still lingers on his cheeks. It is not a tale merely twice told ; it has been told for millions. If, on the other hand, he aspires to be a man, in dignity, independence, spirit, and character, and to give his talents their full scope and vigour ; if, to a steady devotion to the practice of his art, he adds a scientific study of its processes and principles, his success is as sure, as any thing on this side of the grave can be. He may even go farther, and dream of fame ; and, if he possess the sagacity of genius, may build a solid immortality upon the foundation of his own inventions.

And why should it not be so ? Why should not our youth, engaged in the mechanic arts, under the auspices of institutions like this, reach such a noble elevation of purpose ? America has hitherto given her full proportion of genius to the cultivation of the arts. She has never been behind the most intelligent portions of the

world, in her contribution of useful inventions for the common good. There are some circumstances in the situation and character of her population, which afford a wider range for talent and inquiry, than in any other country. The very equality of condition ; the natural structure of society, the total demolition of all barriers against the advancement of talent from one department of life to another ; the non-existence of the almost infinite subdivisions of labour, by which, though more perfection in the result is sometimes obtained, the process has an almost uniform tendency to reduce human beings to mere machines ; the mildness of the government ; the general facility of subsistence ; the absence of all laws regulating trades, and obstructing local competition ;—these, and many other causes, and especially our free schools, and our cheap means of education, offer to ingenuous youth the most inviting prospects to expand and cultivate their intellectual powers. Under such circumstances, is it too much to prophesy, that hereafter America may take the lead in mechanical improvements, and give another bright example to the world, by the demonstration of the truth, that free governments are as well adapted to perfect the arts of life, and foster inventive genius, as they are to promote the happiness and independence of mankind ?

There are no real obstacles in the way, which may not be overcome by ordinary diligence and perseverance. A few hours, saved every week from those devoted to idle pleasure, or listless indolence, would enable every artisan to master, in a comparatively short time, the elementary principles of the arts. He would have the constant benefit of refreshing his recollection by the practical application of them, and receive the demonstration, at the same time that he was taught the truth. He would find, that the acquisitions of every day added a new facility for future improvement ; and that his own mind, quickened and fertilized by various stores of thought, would soon turn that into the truest source of enjoyment, which at first was the minister of toil and anxiety. Consider, for a moment, what must be the immediate effects

of the general adoption of a system of mutual instruction. How powerfully would it work by way of encouragement to laudable ambition ; how irresistibly, to an increase of skill and sagacity in the most common employments of life ! Ask yourselves, what would be the result of one hundred thousand minds engaged at the same moment in the study of mechanical science, and urged on by the daily motives of interest, to acquire new skill, or invent new improvements. It seems to me utterly beyond the reach of human imagination to embody the results, to which such a constant discipline of the intellect, strengthened by the daily experience of the workshop, would conduct us. The slightest spark of intelligence (if I may borrow a figure from the arts) would be blown into a steady flame, and the raw material of genius be kindled by a spontaneous combustion into the most intense light.

Gentlemen, I will detain you no longer. The remarks, which I have addressed to you, have been unavoidably of a loose and desultory nature. They have been thrown together, not in the abundance of my leisure, but of my labours ; in the midst of private cares, and many pressing public duties. Such as they are, I trust they may receive your indulgence, if not for their intrinsic value, at least as my small tribute to the merit of this Institution. If I had possessed more leisure, I should have preferred to have given you, as a more suitable topic for an introductory discourse, some account of the rise and progress of the more important arts and inventions in modern times. A close survey of the difficulties overcome, and of the triumphs achieved by mechanical genius, would, after all, constitute the most valuable commentary upon the powers of the human mind, and the most encouraging lesson in the study of science.

I conclude with the reflection, naturally arising from the subject, that as the true end of philosophy is to render us wiser and happier, so its tendency is to warm our hearts, and elevate our affections, and make us, in the highest sense, religious beings. When we contemplate the physical creation, and observe, from the minutest atom up to the highest intelligence, continual displays of

infinite wisdom, power, and goodness ; when we trace out by the light of science the laws which govern the material world, and observe the order, and harmony, and wonderful adaptation of all, from those, which form the sparkling diamond in the mine, or prepare the volleyed lightning, or generate the terrific earthquake, or direct the motions of the ocean, up to those, which hold the planets in their spheres ; when we turn our thoughts within us, and endeavour to learn what we ourselves are, and consider the nature and capacities of our minds, and feel the divinity, as it were, stir within us ; when we look abroad at the curious displays of human invention in the arts and arrangements of life, and see how man has acquired dominion over the earth, and the sea, and the air, and the water ;—how is it possible, I say, when we contemplate such things, not to look up with awe, and admiration, and gratitude, to the First Great Cause of all these blessings ? How is it possible not to feel, that we are an emanation of that eternal Spirit, which formed and fashioned us, and breathed into us a rational soul ? How is it possible not to read for ourselves a higher destiny, where our powers shall be permitted to expand in endless progression, and continually witness new wonders of the divine perfection ? Surely, in the contemplation of such things, we may well exclaim, “ Great and marvellous are thy works, Lord God Almighty ; in wisdom hast thou made them all.”

DISCOURSE III.*

I SHOULD have hesitated to address you on the present occasion, if it had been supposed to involve any peculiar or extraordinary duties. I have not the leisure to mature a discourse, which should invite the attention of the learned by the extent of its views, or the depth of its investigations. The necessities arising from the constant pressure of professional engagements would alone be sufficient to induce me to decline the task, even if more obvious considerations did not lead me to the same result. He, who would address himself to those, who have cultivated literature with eminent success, or who have travelled, not merely through the broad ways, but the intricate mazes of science, must feel, that he has many things to do, before he can suitably meet the just expectations of his audience. It is not for him, under such circumstances, to place entire reliance upon the resources of his own mind, however comprehensive they may seem to be. It is not for him, under such circumstances, to draw exclusively upon his own genius or imagination for views original, or attractive. He may not rest even on the powers of eloquence (if he should happen to possess them) to adorn his topics with the beauties of an animated diction, or the graces of a vivid style. His thoughts may be brilliant; without being just; or just, without being striking; so as to lead to the bitter sarcasm, that his discourse contains many things new, and

* Introductory to a course of lectures before the families of the professors in Harvard College, delivered in Holden Chapel, December 23, 1830.

many things true ; but the new is not true ; and the true is not new. The least of his anxiety, however, should be, under such circumstances, to be original ; for who can, without rashness, imagine, that, after the lapse of so many ages, in which the lives of so many of the brightest of human minds have been devoted to the cause of science ; who, I say, can, without rashness, imagine, that little of truth has hitherto been gathered, and that her ample stores are, for the first time, about to be revealed to his sight ? If he should indulge in such a vain and dreamy self-complacency, he would painfully learn, that other minds had already anticipated almost all his peculiarities of opinion and comment ; that antiquity had exhausted them in its captivating literature, never yet excelled, and perhaps never to be excelled ; or that modern science, by its exact experiments, had put to flight whatever of theory might float round his own physical researches.

No—under such circumstances, he could rely securely on nothing, but the results of deep and various study. He would seek to fill his mind with the thoughts of others, and elevate his own conceptions by making them the familiar spirits of his hours. He would feel it necessary to invigorate his own powers, by giving his early and his later vigiis to the profound meditations of the great men of other days. He would endeavour to comprehend the large conceptions of Lord Bacon, and, by following the method of induction, pointed out by his wonderful mind, he would invite nature to disclose her mysteries, and aid him in the analysis of her inexhaustible stores. He would meditate—but it is unnecessary to dwell on such considerations. Enough has been said, and more than enough, to teach us the difficulties of such a task ; and to demonstrate that time, as well as diligence, and patience, as well as strength, are necessary to the successful accomplishment of such an achievement.

As I comprehend it, the design of our meetings involves no such complexity of effort or attainment. The lectures, which belong to the brief course sketched out for these walls, belong to a humbler, and more facile

duty. It is our design, not to sound the depths of any portion of science or literature, but to bring together some of the truths, which lie on the surface ; not so much to seek for buried treasures, as to unfold those, which are known and approachable ; not so much to display rarities, as to bring together the useful and the simple ; to present what may not be unworthy of the contemplations of manhood, but yet may lie within the reach of the playfulness of youth. In short, we are here to listen to thoughts, which are so familiar to the wise, that they come almost without bidding, and are dismissed without question or criticism. The poet has told us in two lines, of the masculine brevity and strength of the best days of English verse, (borrowed indeed from classical sources,) the whole of our case :—

“ Content, if here the unlearned their wants may view,
The learned reflect on what before they knew.”

And narrow and humble, as such a scheme may seem to those, whose leisure can command the range of science, or whose ambition would soar to the boundaries of literature, there are some local considerations, which render this not undesirable or unimportant in the circle of our families and friends. We live, indeed, in the midst of academical scenes, where learning has for ages secured the public reverence. We are encompassed with the means and the instruments of science on every side. A noble library, the gift of the munificence of the living, as well as of the dead, looks down upon us with its ponderous and speaking volumes. A philosophical apparatus, which at once lifts our thoughts to the heavens, and busies us with the motions and the changes, the powers and the laws, of the material universe, is within our apparent grasp. We need not call upon the earth to open upon us her minerals and geological treasures ; for our cabinets are enriched with many of her most valuable, as well as most attractive specimens. We seem as if within the very purlieu of the laboratory, where chemistry, no longer dealing with occult arts and preternatural sorcery,

ries, contents herself with solving and resolving bodies, with combining and separating the elements and the gases, and unfolding the phenomena of light and heat, and, as it were, giving a local habitation and a name to her endless wonders. The very bell, which so often rouses us in our morning slumbers, seems for ever vocal with annunciations, inviting our presence to the rooms, where learned professors pour forth their stores upon the interesting topics of divinity, and physics, and metaphysics, and rhetoric, and oratory, and botany, and anatomy, and the philosophy of nature, and the mysteries of art. And yet, in the midst of all this profusion, our families seem in some danger of starving for want of intellectual food. If they cannot count themselves among the matriculated ; if their age, their sex, their pursuits, or even their retiring modesty, forbid them from entering upon these scenes ; they are compelled to forego all that curiosity and taste would covet, to nourish their home resources ; and they are left to consume their time in the monotonous round of common duties. In a larger society, their very wants would soon work out a remedy, to relieve them from such embarrassments. The evil felt in the family circle would extend to the head ; and thus, as in large cities, public lectures would be multiplied, at once to stimulate and to satisfy the desire for knowledge. But here, if I may so say, the very evil has its origin in the ample employments, and devotion to science, of the heads of our families. They, who labour abroad with so much success and ability, require all their domestic leisure to recruit their exhausted spirits, or to prepare themselves for ever recurring labours. I speak, therefore, to the sober sense of those whom I address, when I say, that there seems a peculiar duty on us to give those of our families and friends, who are necessarily precluded from the general cultivation of science, some chance of understanding its elements, and relishing its truths, by the only adequate methods,—the demonstrations of the laboratory, and the living examples of the lecture-room. Truth from the lips is often felt with double sway ; but truth, confirmed by experiment, is not only irresistible in its

conviction, but in its permanent impression on the memory.

With reference, therefore, to our domestic circles, it is of no small importance for us to enlarge the sphere of innocent pleasure ; to instruct the inquisitive mind ; and to furnish new sources of thought and conversation, by observations drawn from the processes of nature, and the elegant demonstrations of art.

But I am far from considering this as the sole, though it may well be deemed a sufficient motive to warm our hearts and kindle our zeal. There are, to those profess-
edly engaged in a particular science, many motives for seeking some acquaintance with other sciences, even if they should not seem, at first, of a kindred character. I do not here allude to those motives, which may be drawn from the abstract value of learning, or the practical benefits of its cultivation. I do not address myself to the pride of scholars, as such ; or to the ambition of those minds, which deem nothing attained, while there yet remains any thing unattained ; which, forgetting the past, press onward and upward for the prize of glory. I do not attempt to shadow forth, even in outline, the praises of knowledge, as they have been vindicated in ancient or in modern times. There are some places and some circumstances, in which such topics, if not matters of impertinent detail, are, at least, matters of supererogation. The genius of the place, the literary atmosphere which we breathe, the very habits of our lives presuppose that learning, in its widest sense, human and divine, is at once our pride and our guide ; the companion of our morning walks, and of our evening meditations ; the instructive friend of our youth ; the support and glory of our old age ; the light, that beams cheerfully upon us in the noonday of hope and joy ; and the polestar, that sets not, and changes not, and deceives not, in the midnight hours of adversity, or in the heavier darkness, whose shadows brood over the valley of death. If I were called upon, indeed, to intermingle in the argument of such topics, I might well distrust my own resources, and I should repose myself upon the sententious wisdom of the greatest

of modern philosophers. "Studies," says my Lord Bacon, "serve for delight, for ornament, and for ability. Their chief use for delight is in privateness and retiring; for ornament, is in discourse; and for ability, is in the judgment and disposition of business.—Histories make men wise; poets, witty; the mathematics, subtle; natural philosophy, deep; morals, grave; logic and rhetoric, able to contend. '*Abeunt studia in mores.*'" To which he might have added, jurisprudence enlarges, invigorates, and chastens the judgment; and theology fills the soul with thoughts of time and eternity, and,

" Letting down their golden chain from high,
Draws every mortal upward to the sky."

But one motive, upon which I would venture to insist, is drawn from the very nature of academical studies, and the exclusive zeal which they are calculated to nourish. No one can fail to remark, that the subdivision of intellectual, as well as of manual labour, though it tends greatly to the perfection of the workmanship, has, in quite as striking a degree, a tendency, if not to narrow the mind, at least, to close its vision to the value of surrounding objects. In proportion as our attainments rise in a favourite pursuit, it grows in importance, in intensity of attraction, and in variety of interest. We feel our own minds expanding under its influence, and our own curiosity enlivened and warmed by its developements. We have the gratifying consciousness of difficulties overcome, of intellectual wealth accumulated, and of honourable ambition rewarded. A spirit of exclusiveness is thus awakened and cherished; until, at last, the appetite increasing with what it feeds on, our imaginations exaggerate the value of our peculiar labours to an alarming extent; and, in the extravagance of our attachment, we look down with utter indifference upon every other department of learning, and deem all but our own, weary, stale, flat, and unprofitable. This dangerous delusion besets the scholar and the devotee of science in every walk of life. But it especially besets him in those academical scenes, where he becomes at once the teacher and the taught; where he is perpe-

tually pouring into other minds the streams of his own knowledge, and, at the same time, is as perpetually compelled to widen and deepen the channels of his own thoughts, to meet the constant demands of such an exhausting flow.

This error is not of a merely speculative nature, but is often attended with practical mischiefs. The mere scholar, intent upon the glorious products of classical literature, dwells with a fond and overweening delight upon the wisdom, and the beauty, and the sublimity of the ancients, until modern learning seems to him but the pastework of imitative jewelry, compared with the pure sparkling of the diamond, or the pellucid crystallizations of the emerald. He is content, if I may so say, to dream with antiquity, and to live with past ages; forgetful of the sober realities of his own life, and that he yet walks this nether sphere. The devotee of physical science, absorbed in its splendid discoveries, and in its new and ever varying details, compelling nature, as it were, to expound her hidden contrivances to him, and to answer his untiring interrogatories, delights in the consciousness of this exercise of power, and looks with amazement on him, who, with equal enthusiasm, traces out the laws of the mind, and gathers up its finer filaments and associations, and touches its secret springs, and unfolds its admirable faculties. The mathematician, dealing with facts of another kind, which rest on demonstrative evidence, and ascending by strict analysis to the most extraordinary results, lying apparently beyond the reach of human genius, acquires a preternatural love for certainties of this sort, and feels, at times, almost as if matter were made only to exercise his ingenuity in searching out the laws of gravitation, and in subjecting the motions of the earth and the heavens to his sublime calculus. On the other hand, the votary of jurisprudence, absorbed in the actual business of human life, and the administration of human laws, in which probabilities and presumptions are the principal instruments to arrive at his conclusions, is apt to place all other sciences at an immeasurable distance below his own, which deals with moral evidence, and to boast of his

common sense, which, though no science, is, in his estimate, fairly worth the seven.

Thus each, in his turn, from the common fascination of his own peculiar profession or study, is but too apt to become generally insensible or indifferent to all others. Instead of gathering new strength from their invigorating truths, or storing his mind with their treasures for use or illustration, each is but too apt to walk in his own round of close and solitary pleasure. If, therefore, no other motive could be found for these lectures of mutual instruction, but the desire to draw the sciences, as it were, in open contact and contrast with each other, that alone, it seems to me, ought to furnish a sufficient inducement, and should stimulate us to a sincere encouragement of the design.

And this leads me to remark, in the next place, that the sciences are of a social nature, and flourish best in the neighbourhood of each other. They furnish literature with some of its most engaging imagery, as well as with some of its most effective instruction. In return, they receive an infinite variety of aids from literature, not merely by way of ornament, but by profound reflection, and close and vigorous reasoning. There is not, within the compass of human learning, a single department, which does not connect itself with every other; which does not derive illustrations of its own truths, and iningle its own results with every other. One of the admirable dispensations of Providence is, thus to make every human attainment pour in its tribute to the common stream of knowledge, so as to widen the common means of social intercourse and social happiness. Whatever be the science, it becomes cold and cheerless, when it casts around a sepulchral light, in its own solitary and noiseless cell. It is when it becomes connected with other sciences, reflecting its own radiance on other objects, and receiving again from them their own brilliant lights, that it warms, and elevates, and enlarges the human soul. A truth is but half felt, when it stands alone. It is only when it belongs to a cluster, that it incites the intellectual appetite, and gives a keener relish to other

food, by the richness as well as the delicacy of its flavour.

One of the most popular journals of our day has lately declared, in a bold and peremptory tone, that it had not "any hesitation in adding, that, within the last fifteen years, not a single discovery or invention of prominent interest has been made in our colleges, and that there is not one man in all the eight universities of Great Britain who is at present known to be engaged in any train of original research."* Without yielding to the truth of this unqualified remark, it may be justly stated, that, if there be any colour for it, it arises from the dissociation of science and literature, which is too apt to be nourished in those universities by the single pursuits of their eminent professors. They are not compelled to think together, or to warm their genius by broad and comprehensive views of physical and intellectual science.

But there are other considerations, not of an academical nature, and belonging to us, in common with all our race, which ought not, on an occasion of this sort, to be wholly passed over. We live in an age full of intellectual excitement. It is not with us, as it was in former times, when science belonged to solitary studies, or philosophical ease, or antiquarian curiosity. It has escaped from the closet, and become an habitual accompaniment of every department of life. It comes, emphatically, home to men's business and bosoms. It accosts us equally in the highways and byways of life. We meet it in the idle walk, and in the crowded street; in the very atmosphere we breathe, in the earth we tread on, in the ocean we traverse, and on the rivers we navigate. It visits the workshop of the mechanic, the laboratory of the apothecary, the chambers of the engraver, the vats of the dyer, the noisy haunts of the spinning jenny, and the noiseless retreats of the bleachery. It seems a very spirit of all work, assuming all shapes, and figuring out all sorts of wonders, in that epitome of a world, a factory. It plays about us in the very smoke of the glass-house, in the gas

* *Quarterly Review*, October, 1830, p. 327.

lights of our shops and theatres, in the beautiful coruscations of nature, and the exquisite imitations of art. It crosses our paths in the long, winding canal, in the busy rail-road, in the flying steam-boat, and in the gay and gallant merchant ship, wafting its products to every clime. It enters our houses, and sits down at our firesides, and lights up our conversations, and revels at our banquets. Not an ice-cream meets our lips, which has not felt the freezing coldness of its hand; not a vapour ascends, which may not be perfumed by its cosmetics and essences. One is almost tempted to say, that the whole world seems in a blaze; and that the professors of science and the dealers in the arts surround us by their magical circles, and compel us to remain captives in the spells of their witchcraft.

Under such circumstances, we are scarcely permitted to remain ignorant of principles, while we are encircled by practical applications of them. If curiosity does not stimulate us to knowledge, we are almost compelled to ask it for safety. Our very ignorance, if it does not betray us into peril, meets us like a spectre, at every turn. We are liable to be questioned on every side, and are not permitted to play the part of mutes. In short, we are driven to the necessity of confessing our ignorance, and avoiding the censure, or manfully meeting the topic, we are obliged to redeem our credit by syllabbling out the first outlines of science.

And yet, with the busy employments and crowded interests of society, how few can find leisure for collateral studies! There is not a single branch of science or literature, which is not, at the present day, so extensive in its reach, that to master it requires a long life of patient labour. Nay, when such a life is at its close, the student seems but just arrived on the threshold of learning. He has done little more than to climb up a hillock, and look to the far distant valley, beyond which lie the mountains he would ascend, that he may survey a wider scene, and inhale a purer atmosphere. We seem, therefore, to be surrounded on every side by difficulties. We must learn what belongs to our own vocation, in order to attain the

comforts and the honours of life. We must learn enough of what belongs to other vocations, that we may mingle in the interests, and partake the triumphs, and relish the pleasures of society. We must read something of other literature, besides that which belongs to our own pursuits, that we may understand the daily, and the weekly, and the monthly, and the quarterly journals which crowd our tables. We must gather up something of other sciences, that we may not seem to belong to the class of mummies, or the dead relics of former ages. We must learn how to thread some of the labyrinths of knowledge, in which we are compelled to wander, lest we should be buried alive in its artificial catacombs. In short, we must be content to be superficial in many things, if we would be wise in the ways of this world ; and yet, without this wisdom, we shall scarcely find ourselves, in a temporal sense, in the ways of pleasantness, or the paths of peace.

It seems to me, that, under such circumstances, the delivery of public lectures, by concentrating what is most valuable in science, and most interesting in art and literature ; by gathering what comes home most closely to our common wants, and illustrates our common pursuits, and varies our common enjoyments ; by shortening the road, and clearing the obstructions, and smoothing the ruggedness of the journey ; accomplishes a most valuable purpose. It has been very recently said, in the bitterness of sarcasm, that, "in this age of extended and diluted knowledge, popular science has become the staple of an extensive trade, in which charlatans are the principal dealers."* If this be true, in any, however qualified, sense, it only proves the intrinsic value of the genuine commodity ; and the insatiable thirst for knowledge, which is abroad in the whole community. It is a fact honourable to the spirit of the age, and brings neither our taste nor our judgment into discredit. It is in vain to contend, that, because we cannot find time to master all science, therefore we should seek for none ; that, because we cannot understand all the details, we should ne-

* *Quarterly Review, October, 1830, p. 326.*

ver learn the elements ; that we should seek to know every thing, or know nothing ; that one should stop short at the first step in knowledge, because he cannot compass the universe. The same line of argument would go to the utter prostration of all intellectual attainments. It would furnish to ignorance its best vindication, and to indolence its boldest excuse. We should not consult a library, because it were a vain attempt to read all the volumes ; we should not hear a lecture, because it did not embrace and exhaust all the science ; we should disdain to hear one who taught important truths, because he had not himself travelled round the farthest limits of human knowledge.

A just estimate of human life and human wants will lead us to far different conclusions. We are perpetually admonished that life is short, and art is long, and nature is inexhaustible. Our destiny allows us, at best, but a narrow choice of objects of pursuit ; and our leisure, brief and transient as it is, admits of little variety of indulgence. We must content ourselves with getting knowledge by snatches ; with gathering it up in fragments ; with seizing on principles and results. We must welcome every mode which abridges labour, and supersedes personal search. We must take the easiest demonstrations and the most simple enunciations. We must follow that which is the ultimate object of all improved processes in the arts, to save labour, insure certainty, and husband time and resources. More than this can belong to the attainments of few, even of the most gifted minds. Less than this ought not to satisfy any one, who is conscious of the end and aim of his being ; and who feels, that, in the proper pursuit of happiness here, he begins the race of immortality.

I have thus far spoken principally of the advantages of lectures upon the elements of science. But the same remarks apply with equal force to select disquisitions upon literary topics of general interest. In truth, literature is so abundant in its products of all sorts, whether for instruction, or pleasure, or ornament ; whether to gratify the taste, or improve the morals, or enlarge the

understanding ; whether for the purpose of civil duties, or political education, or intellectual discipline ; that the task of selection is of itself not unattended with difficulties, and requires talents of no ordinary character. The literature of a single language, ancient or modern, is perhaps beyond the grasp of any single mind ; but the literature of all languages, or even of those within the pale of European fellowship, would require more than an *Atlas* to carry it on his shoulders. All that can be done, under such circumstances, is to follow Lord Bacon's advice, and "read by deputy."

But what strikes me of quite as much value, in such enlarged studies, as any which has been mentioned, is the delightful contemplation it affords us of the successful labours of other minds. We are brought into direct and active sympathy with men of genius in every age. We become witnesses of their toils, their disappointments, and their sufferings. We learn the slow and tedious steps by which eminence has been acquired. We see the result of patient investigation and cautious sagacity. We trace the progress of discovery and invention, from the first clumsy process, or the first accidental guess, to the last glorious result. We see how the slightest incident leads gradually on to the most sublime truths ; how facts, apparently the most remote, converge to the same ultimate point ; how human ingenuity conquers obstacles apparently insurmountable ; and how human enterprise gathers courage even from its very defeats. What can be more curious, or more affecting, than the history of many discoveries ? In the midst of poverty and disappointment, the discoverer is sometimes condemned to pursue his solitary studies. He wastes his health and his resources in experiments, which seem ever on the point of success, and yet mock his toil and delude his hopes. At length the discovery comes. But does it always reward his toil ? No—it but too often happens, that it is received by the public with a cold, reluctant indifference ; or is put in operation, to his ruin, by some more thrifty competitor. Sometimes, indeed, as in the case of Galileo, it subjects him to a prison ; sometimes it sends him,

like Dolland, to his grave, “unwept, unhonoured, and unsung;” sometimes it leaves him, like Fulton, to witness fortunes reared by others upon his labours, and yet, to find himself destined to fall a sacrifice to the vindication of his right to his own discovery. These are some of the misfortunes, which affect us with lively sympathies for the benefactors of mankind. On the other hand, we are warmed, and sometimes dazzled, by the brilliant successes of genius. Who has not felt his soul melt within him, at the liberal ease and modest competence which crowned the life of Newton? Who has not rejoiced in the opulence which followed upon the labours of Watt, and Arkwright, and Franklin, and Davy?

But that which fills us with the deepest admiration, is the wonderful workings of genius, in its own silent studies and its inmost feelings. We see how it learns to thread the mazes of nature, and unfold her laws; at one time, tracing out the hidden causes which link time to eternity, and earth to heaven; at another time, descending to the most minute operations of her power, in the dark mine, or the dripping cave, or the invisible air; and, at still another time, applying its subtile analysis to the decomposition of bodies, until at last we seem in the very presence of the monads, whose miraculous vitality startles us into terror of our own delicate structure.

It is in the contemplation of such minds, and such discoveries, that we lose all grovelling thoughts and vulgar passions. We rise into a higher moral grandeur of desire. We relish holier views of our destiny. We see that these are but the first fruits, or rather buds, of immortality. We enjoy the consciousness, that they are but emanations from that Almighty Being, who has formed and fashioned us from the dust, and breathed into us a portion of his own uncreated and eternal spirit.

And this leads me to remark, in the last place, that there is nothing so well adapted to make us feel a sincere and glowing devotion, such a lively sense of a present Deity, as a wide survey of the operations of nature. It is not by a few reflections alone, on the order and harmony of the visible universe, that we are brought to a

just conception of the existence or attributes of God. It may even be doubtful, if the demonstrations of wisdom and design are more affecting, or more striking, in the power of the unsleeping ocean, or the rushing cataract, or the terrific earthquake, or the blazing volcano, than in the silent forms of crystallization, the infinite combinations of the gases, the microscopic perfection of the insect tribes, or the almost superhuman contrivances, by which the lowest order of beings builds up its coral continent for the dwelling-places of man. Who would imagine, if he were not told, that the very law which retains the planets in their spheres, enables the fly, by means of the pressure of the atmosphere, to walk securely on the ceiling over our heads, by an artificial vacuum instinctively made by its feet? that the very oxygen, which lights up and sustains the ignition of matter, is the same admirable principle, which carries on the circulations of our own blood, and keeps up, in scarcely a figurative sense, the steady flame of life? The truth is, that, the farther our researches extend, the wider our philosophy explores, the deeper our discoveries penetrate, the more are we struck with the evidence of almighty contrivance, design, and power. If we take but a drop of water, we find it crowded with myriads of beings, deriving life, and sustenance, and pleasure from its uncounted particles. If we take the wing of the minutest insect, we know that its slender fibres and its glossy down are perforated by thousands of vessels, and nerves, and filaments, which convey its appropriate nutriment, and impart to it its beautiful colours. Not a single function is misplaced; not a single ligature is superfluous. Nay, perhaps it is not too bold an assertion, which has sometimes been made, that such are the mutual ties and dependencies of things, such the laws of action and reaction, of attractive support and repulsive effort, that not a single atom could be struck out of existence, without involving the destruction of the universe.

If these humble efforts should answer no other purpose than thus to draw us to a more enlarged and varied contemplation of our relations to the first Almighty Cause,

they would not be without their reward. They would awaken a livelier gratitude, and more cheerful confidence towards the Author of our being. They would create a new sense of the dignity of intellectual pursuits, and of the powers of human genius. They would increase our aspirations after that better world, where darkness shall no longer cover our paths, but the light of truth shall break upon our souls with unclouded glory and majesty.

DISCOURSE IV.*

ON THE SCIENCE OF GOVERNMENT.

THE objects of the Institute of Instruction are, as I understand them, in a great measure, if not altogether, of a practical nature. Under such circumstances, the time passed here might well be deemed ill employed, if any attempt were now made merely to bring together topics for literary amusement and recreation; or an elaborate discourse, designed to gratify the taste of scholars, should be substituted for plain, direct, and grave discussion. I shall, therefore, proceed at once to the task which has been assigned to me on the present occasion, and endeavour to bring before you such views as have occurred to me, touching "The Science of Government, as a Branch of popular Education."

The subject naturally divides itself into three principal heads of inquiry. In the first place, is the science of government of sufficient general importance and utility, to be taught as a branch of popular education? In the next place, if it be of such importance and utility, is it capable of being so taught? And, in the third place, if capable of being so taught, what is the best or most appropriate method of instruction? My object is to lay before you some considerations on these topics, in the

* Delivered before the American Institute of Instruction, Aug. 1834.

order in which they are stated ; and I think, that I do not overvalue them, when I assert, that there are few questions of a wider or deeper interest, and few of a more comprehensive and enlarged philosophy, so far as philosophy bears upon the general concerns of human life.

First, then, as to the importance and utility of the science of government. Of course, I do not intend here to speak of the necessity of Government in the abstract, as the only social bond of human society. There are few men in our age, who are disposed to engage in the vindication of what some are pleased to call natural society, as contradistinguished from political society ; or to pour forth elaborate praises in favour of savage life, as superior to, and more attractive than, social life. There is little occasion now to address visionaries of this sort ; and if there were, this is not the time or the place to meet their vague and declamatory asseverations. It is to the *science* of government, that our attention is to be drawn. The question is not, whether any government ought to be established ; but what form of government is best adapted to promote the happiness, and secure the rights and interests, of the people upon whom it is to act. The science of government, therefore, involves the consideration of the true ends of government, and the means by which those ends can be best achieved or promoted. And in this view it may be truly said to be the most intricate and abstruse of all human inquiries ; since it draws within its scope all the various concerns and relations of man, and must perpetually reason from the imperfect experience of the past, for the boundless contingencies of the future. The most that we can hope to do, under such circumstances, is, to make nearer and nearer approximations to truth, without our ever being certain of having arrived at it in a positive form.

This view of the matter is not very soothing to human pride, or human ambition. And yet the history of human experience, for four thousand years, has done little more than to teach us the melancholy truth, that we are as yet but in the infancy of the science ; and that most of its great problems remain as yet unsolved ; or have

been thus far solved, only to mortify human vanity, and disappoint the spirit of political prophecy. Aristotle and Cicero, the great masters of antiquity in political philosophy, exhausted their own ample resources, rather in the suggestion of hints, than in the formation of systems. They pointed out what had been, or then were, the forms and principles of existing governments, rather to check our ardour, than to encourage our hopes; rather to instruct us in our duties and difficulties, than to inflame our zeal, or confirm our theories. They took as little courage from the speculations of Plato, pouring out his fine genius upon his own imaginary republic, as modern times have from examining the Utopia of Sir Thomas Moore, or the cold and impracticable reveries of one of the most accomplished men of the last age, David Hume.

The truth is, that the study of the principles of government is the most profound and exhausting of any which can engage the human mind. It admits of very few fixed and inflexible rules; it is open to perplexing doubts and questions, in most of its elements; and it rarely admits of annunciations of universal application. The principles, best adapted to the wants and interests of one age or country, can scarcely be applied to another age or country, without essential modifications, and perhaps even without strong infusions of opposite principles. The different habits, manners, institutions, climates, employments, characters, passions, and even prejudices and propensities, of different nations, present almost insurmountable obstacles to any uniform system, independently of the large grounds of diversity, from their relative intelligence, relative local position, and relative moral advancement. Any attempt to force upon all nations the same modifications and forms of government, would be founded in just as little wisdom and sound policy, as to force upon all persons the same food, and the same pursuits; to compel the Greenlanders to cultivate vineyards, the Asiatics to fish in the Arctic seas, or the polished inhabitants of the south of Europe to clothe themselves in bear-skins, and live upon Icelandic moss and whale oil.

Government, therefore in a just sense; is, if one may so say, the *science of adaptations*—variable in its elements, dependent upon circumstances, and incapable of a rigid mathematical demonstration. The question, then, What form of government is best? can never be satisfactorily answered, until we have ascertained for what people it is designed; and then it can be answered only by the closest survey of all the peculiarities of their condition, moral, intellectual, and physical. And when we have mastered all these, (if they are capable of any absolute mastery,) we have then but arrived at the threshold of our inquiries. For, as government is not a thing for an hour or a day, but is, or ought to be, arranged for permanence, as well as for convenience of action, the future must be foreseen and provided for, as well as the present. The changes in society, which are for ever silently, but irresistibly, going on; the ever diversified employments of industry; the relative advancement and decline of commerce, manufactures, agriculture, and the liberal arts; the gradual alterations of habits, manners, and tastes; the dangers, in one age, from restless enterprise and military ambition, in another age, from popular excitements and an oppressive poverty, and in another age, from the corrupting influence of wealth and the degrading fascinations of luxury;—all these are to be examined and guarded against, with a wisdom so comprehensive, that it must task the greatest minds and the most mature experience.

Struck with considerations of this sort, and with the difficulties inherent in the subject, there are not a few men among those who aim to guide the opinions of others, who have adopted the erroneous and alarming doctrine, so forcibly expressed by Pope, in a single couplet:

“ For forms of government let fools contest;
Whate'er is best administered, is best.”

As if every thing were to be left to the arbitrary will and caprice of rulers; and the whole interests of society were to be put at risk upon the personal character of those who constitute the existing government. According to

this theory, there is no difference between an absolute despotism, and a well organized republic ; between the securities of a government of checks and balances, and a division of powers, and those of a sovereignty, irresistible and unresisted ; between the summary justice of a Turkish Sultan, and the moderated councils of a representative assembly.

Nay, the doctrine has been pressed to a farther extent, not merely by those who constitute, at all times, the regular advocates of public abuses, and the flatterers of power ; but by men of higher characters, whose morals have graced, and whose philosophy has instructed the age in which they lived. The combined genius of Goldsmith and Johnson arrived at the calm conclusion, that the mass of the people could have little reason to complain of any exercises of tyranny, since the latter rarely reached the obscurity and retirement of private life. They have taught us this great conservative lesson, so deadening to all reforms and all improvements, with all the persuasive eloquence of poetry.

“ In every government, though terrors reign,
Though tyrant kings and tyrant laws restrain,
How small, of all that human hearts endure,
That part, which laws or kings can cause or cure ! ”

If this were true, it would, indeed, be of very little consequence to busy ourselves about the forms or objects of government. The subject might amuse our leisure hours, but could scarcely touch our practical interests. But the truth is far otherwise. The great mass of human calamities, in all ages, has been the result of bad government, or ill-adjusted government ; of a capricious exercise of power, a fluctuating public policy, a degrading tyranny, or a desolating ambition. Bad laws and bad institutions have gradually sunk the peasantry and artisans of most countries to a harsh and abject poverty ; and involved them in sufferings, as varied and overwhelming, as any inflicted by the desolating march of a conqueror, or the sudden devastations of a flood.

But an error of an opposite character, and quite as

mischievous in its tendency, is the common notion, that government is a matter of great simplicity ; that its principles are so clear, that they are little liable to mistake ; that the fabric can be erected by persons of ordinary skill ; and that, when once erected upon correct principles, it will stand without assistance,

“ By its own weight made steadfast and immovable.”

This is the besetting delusion (I had almost said the besetting sin) in all popular governments. It sometimes takes its rise in that enthusiasm which ingenuous minds are apt to indulge in regard to human perfectability. But it is more generally propagated by demagogues, as the easiest method of winning popular favour, by appeals which flatter popular prejudices, and thus enable them better to accomplish their own sinister designs. If there be any truth, which a large survey of human experience justifies us in asserting, it is, that, in proportion as a government is free, it must be complicated. Simplicity belongs to those only, where one will governs all ; where one mind directs, and all others obey ; where few arrangements are required, because no checks to power are allowed ; where law is not a science, but a mandate to be followed, and not to be discussed ; where it is not a rule for permanent action, but a capricious and arbitrary dictate of the hour.

But passing from these general considerations, (upon which it is, at present, unnecessary to enlarge,) I propose to bring the subject immediately home to our own business and bosoms, by examining the importance and utility of the science of government to Americans, with reference to their own political institutions. And I do not hesitate to affirm, not only that a knowledge of the true principles of government is important and useful to Americans, but that it is absolutely indispensable, to carry on the government of their choice, and to transmit it to their posterity.

In the first place, what are the great objects of all free governments ? They are, the protection and preservation of the personal rights, the private property, and the

public liberties of the whole people. Without accomplishing these ends, the government may, indeed, be called free, but it is a mere mockery, and a vain, fantastic shadow. If the person of any individual is not secure from assaults and injuries ; if his reputation is not preserved from gross and malicious calumny ; if he may not speak his own opinions with a manly frankness ; if he may be imprisoned without just cause, and deprived of all freedom in his choice of occupations and pursuits ;—it will be idle to talk of his liberty to breathe the air, or to bathe in the public stream, or to give utterance to articulate language. If the earnings of his industry may be appropriated, and his property may be taken away, at the mere will of rulers, or the clamours of a mob, it can afford little consolation to him, that he has already derived happiness from the accumulation of wealth, or that he has the present pride of an ample inheritance ; that his farm is not yet confiscated, his house has not yet ceased to be his castle, and his children are not yet reduced to beggary. If his public liberties, as a man and a citizen, his right to vote, his right to hold office, his right to worship God according to the dictates of his own conscience, his equality with all others who are his fellow-citizens ; if these are at the mercy of the neighbouring demagogue, or the popular idol of the day ;—of what consequence is it to him, that he is permitted to taste of sweets, which may be wantonly dashed from his lips at the next moment, or to possess privileges, which are felt more in their loss even than in their possession ? Life, liberty, and property stand upon equal grounds in the just estimate of freemen ; and one becomes almost worthless without the security of the others. How, then, are these rights to be established and preserved ? The answer is, by constitutions of government, wisely framed and vigilantly enforced ; by laws and institutions, deliberately examined and steadily administered ; by tribunals of justice above fear, and beyond reproach, whose duty it shall be to protect the weak against the strong, to guard the unwary against the cunning, and to punish the insolence of office, and the spirit of encroachment and wanton injury. It

needs scarcely be said, how much wisdom, talents, discretion, and virtue are indispensable for such great purposes.

In the next place, the people have taken upon themselves, in our free form of government, the responsibility of accomplishing all these ends ; the protection and preservation of personal rights, of property, and public liberty. Is it quite certain, that we shall successfully accomplish such a vast undertaking ? Is any considerate man bold enough to venture such an assertion ? Is not our government itself a new experiment in the history of the world ? Has not every other republic, with all the wisdom, and splendour, and wealth, and power, with which it has been favoured, perished, and perished by its own hands, through the might of its own factions ? These are inquiries, which may not be suppressed or evaded. They must be met, and deliberately weighed. They press upon the minds of thousands, who are most interested in our destiny, as patriots and statesmen. They are not disposed of by a few fine flourishes of rhetoric, or by a blind and boasting confidence. They involve the hopes and the happiness of our whole posterity ; and we must meditate on them, if we would save either ourselves or them. One of the first lessons of wisdom is to understand our dangers ; and, when we understand them, we may then be prepared to meet the duties and difficulties of our position.

In the next place, we have chosen for ourselves the most complicated frame of republican government which was ever offered to the world. We have endeavoured to reconcile the apparent anomaly of distinct sovereignties, each independent of the other in its own operations, and yet each in full action within the same territory. The national government, within the scope of its delegated powers, is, beyond all doubt, supreme and uncontrollable ; and the state governments are equally so, within the scope of their exclusive powers. But there is a vast variety of cases, in which the powers of each are concurrent with those of the other ; and it is almost impossible to ascertain with precision, where the lines of separation between them begin and end. No rulers on earth are

called to a more difficult and delicate task than our own, in attempting to define and limit them. If any collision shall happen, it can scarcely be at a single point only. It will touch, or it will trench, upon jealousies, interests, prejudices, and political arrangements, infinitely ramified throughout the whole extent of the Union. The adjustments, therefore, to be made from time to time, to avoid such collisions, and to carry on the general system of movements, require a degree of forecast, caution, skill, and patient investigation, which nothing but long habits of reflection, and the most mature experience, can supply.

In the interpretation of constitutional questions alone, a vast field is open for discussion and argument. The text, indeed, is singularly brief and expressive. But that very brevity becomes of itself a source of obscurity ; and that very expressiveness, while it gives prominence to the leading objects, leaves an ample space of debateable ground, upon which the champions of all opinions may contend, with alternate victory and defeat. Nay, the very habits of free inquiry, to which all our institutions conduct us, if they do not urge us, at least incite us to a perpetual renewal of the contest. So that many minds are unwilling to admit any thing to be settled ; and the text remains with them a doubtful oracle, speaking with a double meaning, and open to glosses of the most contradictory character. How much sobriety of judgment, solid learning, historical research, and political sagacity are required for such critical inquiries ! Party leaders may, indeed, despatch the matter in a few short and pointed sentences, in popular appeals to the passions and prejudices of the day, or in harangues, in which eloquence may exhaust itself in studied alarms, or in bold denunciations. But statesmen will approach it with a reverent regard. They will meditate upon consequences with a slow and hesitating assent. They will weigh well their own responsibility, when they decide for all posterity. They will feel, that a wound inflicted upon the constitution, if it does not bring on an immediate gangrene, may yet introduce a lingering disease, which will weaken its vital organs, and ultimately destroy them.

But it is not in the examination and solution of constitutional questions alone, that great abilities, and a thorough mastery of the principles of government, are required of American statesmen. The ordinary course of legislation, in the national councils, is full of intricate and perplexing duties. It is not every man who can make an animated address at a popular meeting, or run through the common-places of party declamation at the hustings, with a fluent elocution and a steady presence, who is qualified for a seat in the national legislature. The interests of four and twenty states are there represented, and are there to be scrupulously weighed and protected.

Look but for a moment over the vast extent of our country ; the varieties of its climates, productions, and pursuits ; its local peculiarities and institutions ; its untiring enterprise, and inexhaustible industry. Look to the ever changing character of agriculture ; the sugar, cotton, and rice of the South ; the wheat, corn, and tobacco of the Middle States ; and the stubborn, but thrifty growth of the North, yielding to culture what seems almost denied to climate. Look to the busy haunts of our manufactures, rising on a thousand hills, and sheltered in a thousand valleys, and fed by a thousand streams. Every where they are instinct with life, and noisy or noiseless industry, and pouring forth their products to every market with an unceasing flow, which gathers as it goes. Look to the reaches of our foreign commerce through every region of the globe. It floats on the burning breezes of Africa ; it braves the stormy seas of the Arctic regions. It glides with a bounding speed on the weary coasts and broad streams of Southern America. It doubles the Capes of the Indies, and meets the trade-winds and monsoons in the very regions of their birth. It gathers its treasures from the deep soundings of the Banks of Newfoundland. It follows the seal in his secret visits to the lonely islands of the Southern Pacific. It startles the whale on his majestic march through every latitude, from the hither Atlantic to the seas of Japan. The sun shines not on the region, where its flag has not saluted the first beams of the morning.

It sets not, where its last lingering rays have not played on the caps of its masts. And then, again, look to the reaches of our internal commerce along the various inlets, and bays, and ports of the seaboard, through the vast and almost interminable rivers and valleys of the West; on the broad and restless lakes, through the deep prairies, and up the steeps of the Rocky Mountains, and onward to the far Ocean, which washes the darkened shores of two continents. Look, I say, to these extensive yet connected interests, and who but must admit, that to understand their intricate relations and dependences, to gather up even the fragments of that knowledge which it is necessary to possess, in order (I will not say to guide and direct them, but) not to mar and destroy them, there must be years of patient, thorough, and laborious research into the true principles, and policy, and objects of government.

But it is not to rulers and statesmen alone, that the science of government is important and useful. It is equally indispensable for every American citizen, to enable him to exercise his own rights, to protect his own interests, and to secure the public liberties and the just operations of public authority. A republic, by the very constitution of its government, requires, on the part of the people, more vigilance and constant exertion than all others. The American republic, above all others, demands from every citizen unceasing vigilance and exertion; since we have deliberately dispensed with every guard against danger or ruin, except the intelligence and virtue of the people themselves. It is founded on the basis, that the people have wisdom enough to frame their own system of government, and public spirit enough to preserve it; that they cannot be cheated out of their liberties; and that they will not submit to have them taken from them by force. We have silently assumed the fundamental truth, that, as it never can be the interest of the majority of the people to prostrate their own political equality and happiness, so they never can be seduced by flattery or corruption, by the intrigues of faction, or the arts of ambition, to adopt any measures

which shall subvert them. If this confidence in ourselves be justified, (and who among Americans does not feel a just pride in endeavouring to maintain it ?) let us never forget, that it can be justified only by a watchfulness and zeal proportionate to our confidence. Let us never forget, that we must prove ourselves wiser, and better, and purer, than any other nation ever yet has been, if we are to count upon success. Every other republic has fallen by the discords and treachery of its own citizens. It has been said by one of our departed statesmen, himself a devout admirer of popular government, that power is perpetually stealing from the many to the few. It has been said by one of the greatest orators of antiquity, whose life was devoted to the republic with a zealous but unsuccessful patriotism, that the bad will always attack, with far more spirit, than the good will defend, sound principles. The republic, said he, with a melancholy eloquence, the republic is assailed with far more force and contrivances, than it is defended, because bold and profligate men are impelled by a nod, and move of their own accord against it. But I know not how it happens, the good are always more tardy. They neglect the beginning of things, and are roused only in the last necessity. So that sometimes, by their delay and tardiness, while they wish to retain ease, even without dignity, they lose both. Those who are willing to be the defenders of the republic, if they are of the lighter sort, desert ; if they are of the more timid sort, they fly. Those alone remain, and stand by the republic, whom no power, no threats, no malice can shake in their resolution.* Such is the lesson of ancient wisdom, admonishing us, as from the grave ; and it was pronounced, as it were, at the very funeral of Roman liberty.

Besides ; in other countries, there are many artificial barriers against sudden changes and innovations, which retard, if they do not wholly obstruct them. There are ecclesiastical and civil establishments, venerable from their antiquity, and engrafted into the very habits, and

* Cicero, *Oratio pro Sextio*, ch. 47.

feelings, and prejudices of the people. There are hereditary honours and privileges, the claims of aristocracy, and the influences of wealth, accumulated and perpetuated in a few families. We have none of these to embarrass, or overawe us. Our statutes, regulating the descent of estates, have entirely broken down all the ordinary means of undue accumulation ; and our just pride is, that the humblest and highest citizens are upon a footing of equality. Nothing here can resist the will of the people ; and nothing, certainly, ought to resist their deliberate will. The elements of change are therefore about us in every direction, from the fundamental articles of our constitutions of government, down to the by-laws of the humblest municipality.

Changes, then, may be wrought by public opinion, wherever it shall lead us. They may be sudden, or they may be slow ; they may be for the worse, as well as for the better ; they may be the solid growth of a sober review of public principles, and a more enlightened philosophy ; or they may be the spurious product of a hasty and ill advised excitement, flying from evils, which it knows and feels, to those far greater, which it sees not, and may never be able to redress. They may be the artful delusions of selfish men, taking advantage of a momentary popularity, or the deep-laid plan of designing men, to overthrow the foundations of all free institutions. This very facility of introducing changes should make us more scrupulous in adopting innovations ; since they often bring permanent evils in their train, and compensate us only by accidental and temporary good. What is safe, is not always expedient ; what is theoretically true, is often practically false, or doubtful ; what, at the first glance, seems beneficial and plausible, is, upon more mature examination, often found to be mischievous or inefficient ; what constitutes the true policy and security of free governments, lies, not unfrequently, so distant from immediate observation and experience, that it is rashly rejected or coldly received. Hence it has been remarked, that a free people rarely bestow on good rulers the powers necessary for their own permanent protec-

tion, and as rarely withhold from bad ones those which may be used for their own destruction.

Again, independently of the common causes which are constantly at work in all governments, founded upon the common passions and infirmities of human nature, there are in republics some peculiar causes to stimulate political discontents, to awaken corrupt ambition, and to generate violent parties. Factions are the natural, nay, perhaps, the necessary growth of all free governments; and they must prevail with more activity and influence, just in proportion as they enlist in their ranks the interest and power of numbers. Where all the citizens are, practically speaking, voters, it is obvious, that the destiny of public men and public measures must essentially depend on the contest at the polls, and the wisdom of the choice, which is there made. We need not be told, that many other influences are present on such occasions besides those which arise from talents, merit, and public services. We need not be told, how many secret springs are at work, to obstruct that perfect freedom and independence of choice, which are so essential to make the ballot-box the just index of public opinion. We need not be told, how often the popular delusions of the day are seized upon, to deprive the best patriots of their just reward, and to secure the triumph of the selfish, the cunning, and the timeserving. And yet, unless the people do at all times possess virtue, and firmness, and intelligence enough, to reject such mischievous influences; unless they are well instructed in public affairs, and resolutely maintain the principles of the constitution, it is obvious, that the government itself must soon degenerate into an oligarchy; and the dominant faction will rule with an unbounded and desolating energy. The external forms of machinery of the republic may continue to exist, like the solemn pageantry of the Roman Senate, in the times of the emperors; but the informing spirit will have departed, and leave behind it only the faded and melancholy memorials of irretrievable decay.

I have but glanced at these considerations, each of which might well furnish a topic for a full discourse. If

the remarks already suggested are in any measure well founded, they establish the great truth, that, as in the American republic, the people themselves are not only the source of all power, but the immediate organs and instruments of its due exercise at all times, it is of everlasting importance to them to study the principles of government; and thoroughly to comprehend men, as well as measures, tendencies, as well as acts, and corrupting influences, as well as open usurpations. To whom can we justly look for the preservation of our public liberties and social rights; for the encouragement of piety, religion, and learning; for the impartial administration of justice and equity; for wise and wholesome laws, and a scrupulous public faith;—but to a people, who shall lay a solid foundation for all these things in their early education; who shall strengthen them by an habitual reverence and approbation; and who shall jealously watch every encroachment, which may weaken the guards, or sap the supports on which they rest?

And this leads me to the next topic, upon which I propose to address you; and that is, the practicability of teaching the science of government, as a branch of popular education. If it be not capable of being so taught, then, indeed, well may patriots and philanthropists, as well as philosophers, sink into profound despair in regard to the duration of our republic. But it appears to me, that we are by no means justified in arriving at such a desponding conclusion. On the contrary, we may well indulge a firm and lively hope, that, by making the science of government an indispensable branch of popular education, we may gradually prepare the way for such a mastery of its principles, by the people at large, as shall confound the sophist, repress the corrupt, disarm the cunning, animate the patriotic, and sustain the moral and religious.

It is true, that a thorough mastery of the science of government, in all its various operations, requires a whole life of laborious diligence. But it is equally true, that many of its general principles admit of a simple enunciation, and may be brought within the comprehension of

the most common minds. In this respect, it does not materially differ from any of the abstract physical sciences. Few of the latter are, in their full extent, within the reach of any but the highest class of minds ; but many of the elements are, nevertheless, within the scope of common education, and are attainable by ordinary diligence. It is not necessary that every citizen should be a profound statesman. But it may, nevertheless, be of vast consequence, that he should be an enlightened, as well as an honest voter, and a disciplined thinker, if not an eloquent speaker. He may learn enough to guard himself against the insidious wiles of the demagogue, and the artful appeals of the courtier, and the visionary speculations of the enthusiast ; although he may not be able to solve many of the transcendental problems in political philosophy.

In the first place, as to the constitution of the United States ; (and similar considerations will apply, with at least equal force, to all the state constitutions;) the text is contained in a few pages, and speaks a language, which is generally clear and intelligible to any youth of the higher classes at our common schools, before the close of the usual academical studies. Nay, it may be stated with confidence, that any boy, of ordinary capacity, may be made fully to understand it, between his fourteenth and sixteenth year, if he has an instructor of reasonable ability and qualifications. He may become possessed of the actual organization and powers of the government under which he lives, to which he is responsible, and which he is enjoined, by every duty of patriotism and interest, to transmit unimpaired to future generations. He may practically learn the leading divisions of the great powers of all governments, into legislative, executive, and judicial. He may ascertain, in some general way, the definite boundaries and appropriate functions of each. He may understand yet more ; that there are checks and balances everywhere interposed, to limit power, and prevent oppression, and ensure deliberation, and moderate action. He may perceive, that the House of Representatives cannot make laws, without the co-operation of the Se-

nate ; that the President cannot make appointments, without the consent of the Senate ; and yet, that the President can, by his qualified veto, arrest the legislative action of both houses. He may perceive, that the Judiciary, in many parts of its organization, acts through, and by, and under the will of the Legislature and Executive ; and yet that it stands, in many respects, independent of each ; nay, that it has power to resist the combined operations of both ; and to protect the citizens from their unconstitutional proceedings, whether accidental or meditated. He may perceive, that the state governments are indispensable portions of the machinery of national government ; that they in some cases control it ; and in others, again, are controlled by it ; that the same supreme law which promulgates prohibitions upon certain acts to be done by the States, at the same time promulgates like prohibitions upon the acts of the United States. He may perceive, that there are certain leading principles laid down, as the fundamental rules of government ; and that they constitute a solemn bill of rights, which must be obeyed, and cannot be gainsaid. He may perceive, that the trial by jury is preserved, as a matter of right, in all cases of crimes, and generally, also, in civil cases ; that the liberty of speech and of the press are constitutionally vindicated ; that no national religion can be imposed upon the community ; that private property cannot be taken away without adequate compensation ; and that the inviolability of public and private contracts is strenuously enforced.

Having arrived at this clear and definite view of the distribution of the powers of government, with the appropriate restrictions belonging to them, he can scarcely fail to ask, What are the reasons which induced the framers of the constitution to adopt them ? It is scarcely possible that he should be so dull as not to have some desire to gratify, or so indifferent as not to have some curiosity to indulge, such inquiries. When he is told, on every side, that this is the form of government best calculated to secure his personal happiness, and animate his love of liberty ; it would be incredible that he should feel no in-

terest in ascertaining, why and wherefore it is so. Why, for instance, legislation may not as well be confided to one body, as to two distinct bodies? Why unity in the Executive is preferable to plurality of numbers? Why the Judiciary should be separated from the other branches? Why, in short, simplicity in government is destructive of public liberty; and a complex machinery of checks and balances is indispensable to preserve it? Inquiries of this sort, if they do not spontaneously rise up in his own mind, cannot be presented to it by his instructor, without opening new and various sources of reflection. He will thus be conducted to the threshold of that profound science, which begins and ends with the proper study of man in all his social relations.

And here, again, it may be confidently affirmed, that there is not the slightest difficulty in unfolding to our youth the true nature and bearing of all these arrangements, and the reasons on which they are founded. Although they are the result of human wisdom, acting upon the most comprehensive human experience, and have tasked the greatest minds to discover and apply them; they are, nevertheless, capable of as exact a demonstration, as any other problems of moral philosophy, applied to the business of human life. It required the genius of Newton to discover the profound mystery of the universal law of gravitation; but every schoolboy can now reason upon it, when he bathes in the refreshing coolness of the summer stream, or gazes with unmixed delight on the beautiful starlight of the wintry heavens. So it is with political philosophy. Its great truths can be clearly taught, and made familiar to the juvenile mind, at the same time, that they may well employ the most exalted powers of the human understanding. What more difficulty, for instance, is there in a scholar's comprehending the value of checks, and balances, and divisions of power in a government, than in comprehending the value of good order and discipline in a school, or the propriety of trustees laying down rules to regulate and control the head master, and he, other rules to guide and direct his ushers? The principles may not, indeed, always be ob-

vious to the narrow circle of his thoughts ; but they can be pointed out. They may lie too remote for his immediate observation ; but he may learn the paths by which they may be explored. They may not, as yet, be within his grasp ; but he can be taught how they may be reached by skill and diligence. He may not, as yet, see their full extent and operation ; but his vision will gradually expand, until he can seize on the most distant objects, and bring them, as it were, under the eye of his mind with a close and cloudless certainty. Every element of knowledge, which he thus gradually acquires, will soon become incorporated into his former stock, until, at last, he has accumulated a capital, upon which he may safely set up for himself ; and, by widening, and deepening, and strengthening the foundations, he may, at length, acquire a character for political wisdom and ability, which shall make him at once an ornament and a blessing to his country, even though he may never pass beyond the precincts of his native village. He may there be able to quiet the discontented murmurs of a misguided populace. He may there repress the ordinary love of innovation of the young, the ignorant, and the restless. He may there stand the unconquerable friend of liberty ; recommending it by his virtues, and sustaining it by his councils. He may there withstand the village tyrant, too often disguised under the specious character of the village demagogue. And he may there close his life with the conscious satisfaction, that, as a village patriot, he has thus filled up the measure of his duties ; and has earned a far more enviable title to true glory, than the conqueror, who has left the dark impressions of his desolations in the ruined hopes and fortunes of millions.

If, on the other hand, a higher destiny awaits him ; if he is called to take a part in the public councils of the state, or nation ; what immense advantages must such preparatory studies and principles give him over those, who rise into public life by the accidents of the day, and rush into the halls of legislation with a blind and daring confidence, equalled only by their gross ignorance, and their rash ardour for reform ! For weal, or for woe, our

destiny must be committed to the one or the other of these classes of rulers, as public opinion shall decide. Who would willingly commit himself to the skill of a pilot, who had never sounded the depths, or marked the quicksands of the coast? Who would venture to embark his all on board a ship, on a short voyage, (far less, on the voyage of life,) when the crew have not learned how to trim the sails, and there is neither chart nor compass on board to guide the navigation?

I am not aware, that there are any solid objections which can be urged against introducing the science of government into our common schools, as a branch of popular education. If it should be said, that it is too deep and difficult for the studies of youth, that objection assumes the very matter in controversy; and, if the observations already made are well founded, it is wholly indefensible. If it should be said, that it will have a tendency to introduce party creeds and party dogmas into our schools, the true answer is, that the principles of government should be there taught, and not the creeds or dogmas of any party. The principles of the constitution under which we live; the principles upon which republics generally are founded, by which they are sustained, and through which they must be saved; the principles of public policy, by which national prosperity is secured, and national ruin averted; these, certainly, are not party creeds, or party dogmas; but are fit to be taught at all times and on all occasions, if any thing which belongs to human life and our own condition is fit to be taught. If we wait until we can guard ourselves against every possible chance of abuse, before we introduce any system of instruction, we shall wait until the current of time has flowed into the ocean of eternity. There is nothing which ever has been, or ever can be taught, without some chance of abuse, nay, without some absolute abuse. Even religion itself, our truest and our only lasting hope and consolation, has not escaped the common infirmity of our nature. If it never had been taught, until it could be taught with the purity, simplicity, and energy of the apostolic age, we ourselves, instead of being blest with

the bright and balmy influences of Christianity, should now have been groping our way in the darkness of heathenism, or left to perish in the cold and cheerless labyrinths of scepticism.

If it be said, that there is not time, or means, suitable to learn these principles in our common schools, the true answer is, that, if the fact be so, (which is not admitted,) more time should be given, and more ample means be supplied, for the purpose. What is the business of education, but to fit men to accomplish their duties and their destiny? And who is there among Americans, that is not called to the constant performance of political duties, and the exercise of political privileges? He may perform, or use them, well or ill. But the results of the use and abuse are, and ever will be, mixed up with his own intimate interests. The perils, he may choose that others shall encounter, he must share in common with them. He is embarked in the same ship of state, and the shipwreck which shall bury the hopes of others, will not spare his own. What blessings in human life can fairly be put in competition with those derived from good government and free institutions? What condition can be more deplorable than that, where labour has no reward, property no security, and domestic life no tranquillity? where the slave is compelled to kiss the chain, which binds him to wretchedness, and smile upon his oppressor, while his heart is writhing in agony? Let not Americans forget, that Greece, immortal Greece, has been free; and yet, that thousands of years have already rolled over her servitude; that Italy, beautiful Italy, has been free; but where is now her republican grandeur? The Apennines still lift up their bold and rugged peaks; the sun still looks down upon her plains with a warm and cloudless splendour;—but the spirit of liberty is not there; and Rome has become, as it were, the vast sepulchre of her own perished glory.

But, independent of the grave considerations, already urged in favour of the introduction of political studies into our system of popular education, there are other collateral advantages which should not be wholly passed by.

In the first place, there are no studies better fitted to discipline the mind, or to accustom it to severe and close investigation. They combine, in a very high degree, the speculations of philosophy with the varied events of history, and increase the separate interest of each. They have a tendency to enlarge and liberalize the mind, by familiarizing it with comprehensive views of men and things. They are capable of an indefinite expansion and variety ; such as may employ the whole leisure of the most retired scholar, or suit the short and hasty intervals of the man of business. They gather up new materials in the daily intercourse of society ; and, at the same time, they enable us to expound its apparent anomalies, and classify its varied results.

In the next place, they have a powerful tendency to counteract the rash and hasty judgments, which youth and inexperience naturally produce in ardent and inquisitive minds. Nothing is so fascinating and so delusive, as the simplicity of theory, in the earlier stages of life. It not only flatters that pride of opinion, which results from a supposed mastery of important truths ; but it gratifies that fresh and vigorous confidence, which hopeth all things, and believeth all things. The severe lessons of experience do indeed generally correct, or demolish these visionary notions. But they often come so slow, that irreparable mistakes have been already committed ; and the party is left to mourn over the blight of his own prospects, or the impending dangers to his country. Nothing can have a more salutary effect in repressing this undue pride and confidence than the study of the science of government. The youth is there taught, how little reliance can be placed upon mere abstract speculations ; how often that which is theoretically true, becomes practically mischievous ; how complicated is the machinery necessary to carry on the operations of a good government ; how many nice adjustments are required, to give full play and activity to the system ; how slow every change must be, to be safe, as well as improving ; and, above all, how often the wisest statesmen, the truest patriots, and the most profound reasoners, find defects

where they had least suspected them ; and their labours, begun with energy and confidence, end in disappointment and mortification. Nay, systems of government, which have been apparently reared with consummate skill and solidity, have often been found buried in ruins, before the capstone has been placed upon them ; and, while the architect has been still gazing on his own work, he has become the first victim of its ponderous magnificence.

Considerations of this sort cannot wholly escape an ingenuous youth, upon the most cursory examination of government, as it is read by the lights of history. They will naturally inspire caution, if they do not awaken distrust ; and when, at every step of his advancement in political studies, he finds himself compelled to surrender some imagined truth, to discredit some popular dogma, and to doubt some plausible theory, he cannot but profit by the instructions which they hold out, and the admonitions which they silently inculcate. A nation, whose citizens are habitually attentive to the principles and workings of government, may sometimes be betrayed ; but it can scarcely be ruined. At least, it cannot be enslaved, until it has sunk so low in corruption, that it will hail the presence of any tyrant, to escape from the terrible scourges of anarchy.

But it may be asked, and this is the last topic on which I propose to address you, In what mode is the science of government to be taught in our common schools ? The answer may be given in a few words. It is by the introduction and constant use of suitable elementary works, which unfold the principles of government, and illustrate their application, and in an especial manner, with reference to the forms of the American constitutions. Such works should not only be read, but be studied as class-books. The instructor, if he possesses common skill and ingenuity, may easily make them, not a dry task, but an interesting exercise. By bringing constantly before the school, in the course of reading and recitation, and occasional explanations, the leading principles of government, he will gradually make the pupils familiar with their bearing and value. They may not at once arrive at the vari-

ous truths which are designed to be taught ; but they will silently master them. And by the time they have passed through the usual preparatory studies of the school, they will have acquired a stock of materials for future use, of inestimable value—a stock, which will furnish perpetual sources for meditation, and enable them to lay a broad foundation for the due discharge of the duties of private citizens, and the more arduous employments of public life.

Lord Brougham, one of the most powerful advocates of popular education in our day, has made the following remarks, which cannot be more fitly addressed to the consideration of any other body than that which I have now the honour to address. “ A sound system of government,” says he, “ requires the people to read, and inform themselves upon political subjects ; else they are the prey of every quack, every impostor, and every agitator, who may practise his trade in the country. If they do not read ; if they do not learn ; if they do not digest, by discussion and reflection, what they have read and learned ; if they do not qualify themselves to form opinions for themselves, other men will form opinions for them ; not according to the truth and the interests of the people, but according to their own individual and selfish interest, which may, and most probably will, be contrary to that of the people at large. The best security for a government like ours, (a free government,) and generally, for the public peace and public morals, is, that the whole community should be well informed upon its political, as well as its other interests. And it can be well informed only by having access to wholesome, sound, and impartial publications.”

I shall conclude this discourse with a single sentence, borrowed from the great work of Cicero on the Republic, the most mature, and not least important, of his splendid labours—a sentence which should always be present to the mind of every American citizen, as a guide and incentive to duty. “ Our country,” said that great man, “ has not given us birth, or educated us under her law, as if she expected no succour from us ; or that, seek-

ing to administer to our convenience only, she might afford a safe retreat for the indulgence of our ease, or a peaceful asylum for our indolence; but that she might hold in pledge the various and most exalted powers of our mind, our genius, and our judgment, for her own benefit; and that she might leave for our private use such portions only as might be spared for that purpose."*

* Cicero, *De Republicâ*, lib. 1, cap. 4.

THE

ELEMENTS

OF

BIBLICAL INTERPRETATION,

CONTAINING

A POPULAR EXPOSITION

OF THE

FUNDAMENTAL PRINCIPLES AND RULES
OF THIS SCIENCE.

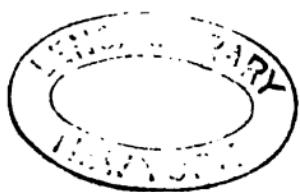
BY

REV. L. A. SAWYER, A. M.

PASTOR OF THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH, MARTINSBURG, N. Y.

EDINBURGH:
THOMAS CLARK, 38, GEORGE STREET.

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PREFACE.

It has been very pertinently remarked by a distinguished scholar and theologian,* that “ every man who attaches a meaning to a text of Scripture, so far acts as an interpreter of Scripture. And in an age when almost all can read, and when, it may be hoped, that many more than at any former period are seriously occupied with the study of the Word of God, it cannot be considered as a useless undertaking to endeavour to fix some principles of Biblical Interpretation. And when the character of the times is such that every sober Christian must daily come in contact with schemes of doctrine which to him are perfectly new, and hear them supported by texts of Scripture which he has been accustomed to understand in a very different sense,—under such circumstances he must be desirous of obtaining some rules, whereby he may account not merely to an opponent, but still more to his own conscience, for believing that the texts mean one thing rather than another.”

Few, it is believed, will refuse their assent to this view of the subject ; and, considering its paramount importance, we cannot hesitate to say, that every effort, however humble, which contributes to promote an enlightened acquaintance with the sacred Scripture, must be acceptable to every well-constituted mind ; for an enlightened study of the Bible is the only true foundation of all Christian Theology.

Some may indeed imagine that their ignorance of the original languages of the Scripture will disqualify them from the correct application of these rules of interpretation, or at least forms a sufficient ground of exemption from entering upon what they are willing to persuade

* Rev. C. H. Terrot, in the preface to his translation of Ernesti's Principles of the Interpretation of the New Testament, **BIBLICAL CABINET**, Vols. I. and IV.

themselves is the peculiar province and business of the professed Theologian. It is to such persons that this Tract comes particularly recommended; for whether the incapacity arises from an indisposition to undergo the necessary mental labour, or from some other cause, it still remains true that the application of these rules to our authorised English version, is, in all essential points, as available to the unlearned student in enabling him to determine the meaning of the translator, as they are to the more learned interpreter in enabling him to decide as to the meaning of the original author.

It is hoped that few will be inclined to deny that it is the duty of every human being to avail himself of all the means which God has put within his reach for the accurate understanding of his revealed will.

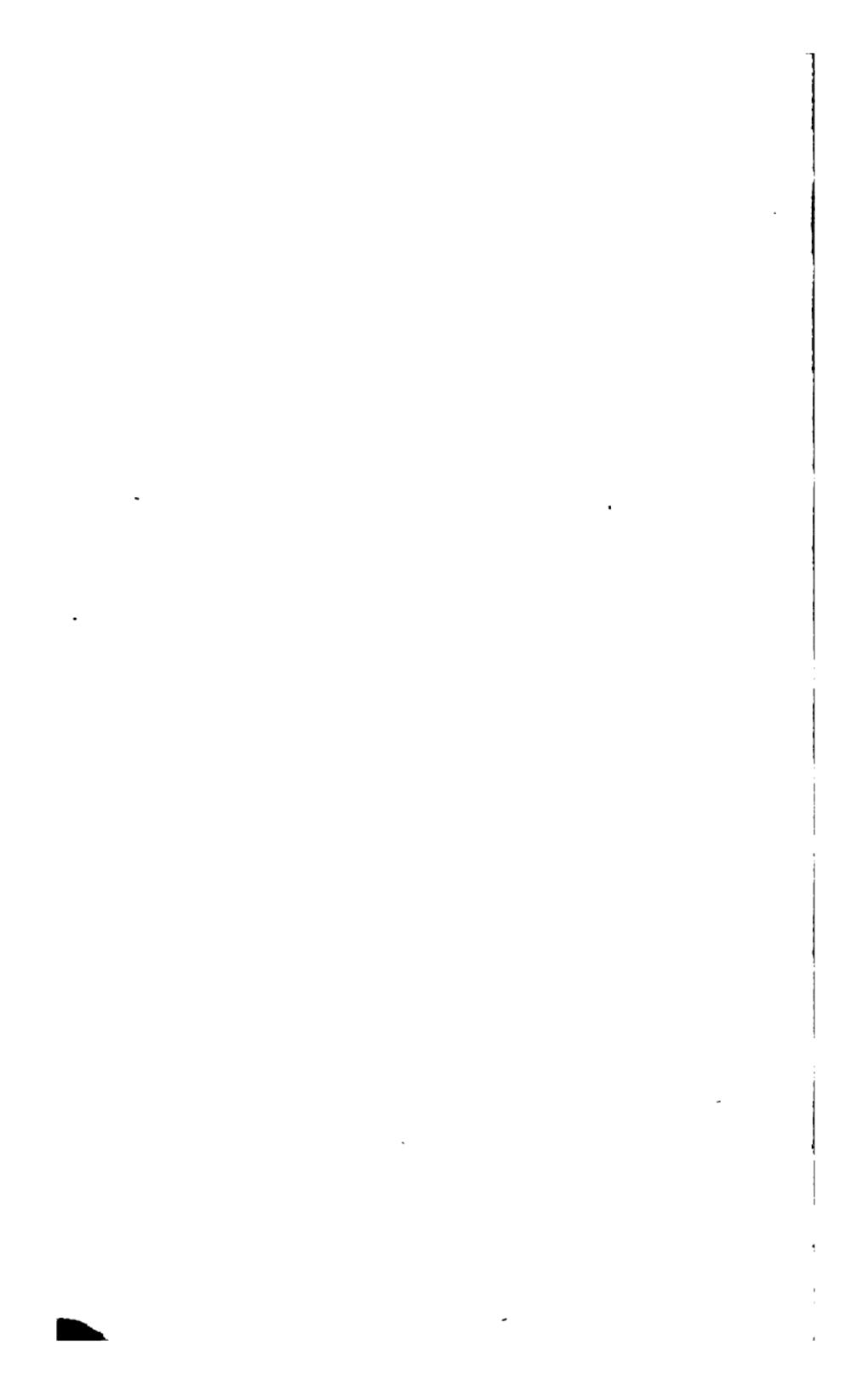
It may be proper to mention, what indeed may be gathered from what has just been said, that this Tract is not intended for the use of the professional Theologian,* but rather for the great mass of the Christian community, and in an especial manner for the benefit of the YOUNG, to whom it will afford intelligible and sound direction, and profitable assistance in their daily perusal of the Word of God. It will also furnish them with an additional means of answering and silencing the gainsayer and scoffer; and in this way most distinctly identify itself with "The Students' Cabinet Library of USEFUL TRACTS."

*Edinburgh, 38, George Street,
April 1836.*

* We beg to refer those who wish to see the Principles of Biblical Interpretation treated in the most scientific manner, to the learned and elaborate works on this subject by Ernesti on the New Testament, and Pareau on the Old Testament, forming Vols. I. IV. and VIII. of the BIBLICAL CABINET, published at Edinburgh, 1832-5.

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RECOMMENDATORY LETTERS.

The following letters from gentlemen whose studies have been directed to the subject of Interpretation, and who enjoy, in a high degree, the confidence of the Christian public, shew in what light the following work is viewed by their respective authors.

Rev. GEORGE BUSH, Professor of Hebrew and Oriental Literature, in the New York University, writes as follows:—

MR. SAWYER: *New York, May 10, 1834.*

DEAR SIR—At your request I have given an unavoidably hasty perusal to the little treatise on the Elements of Biblical Interpretation. Both the plan and the execution of the work in their general features meet my cordial approbation. Perhaps, indeed, if rigidly interrogated, I might hesitate in giving a full assent to some few of its positions, as it is scarcely possible to invest the principles of this science, particularly as they relate to Prophecy and the Double Sense, with a demonstrative certainty. But, on the whole, I consider your work a valuable accession to the department to which it belongs. It is clear, simple, precise, well-reasoned and well-arranged—the first requisites in any elementary work. Being free from scholastic technicalities, it is well adapted to popular use, while the graver studies of the divine and the critic will be aided by its valuable hints.

Very respectfully yours,

GEO. BUSH.

Rev. A. BARNES, of the First Church, Philadelphia.

MR. SAWYER:

I have at your request given a perusal to your little work on the Interpretation of the Scriptures. With the

sentiments expressed by Professor Bush in regard to it, I am happy to concur. Such a work seems to me to be much demanded, and adapted to do much good. The great mass of Christians have not access to the larger works on this science; and yet nothing, in my view, is more important in the promotion of humble and enlightened piety, than a correct knowledge of the laws of the interpretation of the Bible. Nothing, I am satisfied, will tend more to suppress wild, irregular, and fanatical views of divine truth, than such views of interpretation. To every effort, therefore, to promote such knowledge, I am happy to express my earnest wish of success.

Very respectfully yours,

ALBERT BARNES.

Philadelphia, May 20, 1834.

Rev. C. HODGE, Professor of Biblical and Oriental Literature in the Theological Seminary, Princeton.

To the Rev. Mr. SAWYER:

MY DEAR SIR—As the Sacred Scriptures are the only infallible guide to the knowledge of divine truth, it is evident that their right interpretation is a matter of vital importance. It is not ministers alone to whom this interpretation belongs,—it is at once the privilege and duty of every reader of the Bible to endeavour to ascertain its true meaning. I therefore rejoice that you have been led to prepare a work designed for the instruction of general readers on this important subject. As far as I have had the opportunity of examining your treatise, I think it well adapted to the object you have in view. The portions on the Double Sense and the Interpretation of Prophecy, I have not read, and therefore cannot say how far our views on those points may differ.

Yours respectfully,

C. HODGE.

BIBLICAL INTERPRETATION.

SECTION I.

INTRODUCTORY REMARKS.

I. IGNORANCE of the principles and rules of interpretation, is one of the greatest obstacles in the way of obtaining a correct knowledge of the Bible. Language is a medium of communication between man and his fellow man. Through this medium the thoughts, desires, and determinations of one mind are made known to another. God has made communications to the world, and in condescension to human weakness, has made these by the instrumentality of human language. He did not form a new language to be the medium of communication between himself and his creatures, but made use of that already formed and in use by men. Neither did he construct this language anew to make it answer his purpose ; he took it just as it was, and used it just as he found it, for the benevolent purpose of instructing his creatures in the way of life and salvation. In the earlier ages of the world he found the Hebrew in use, and he then made his communications in that : in later times, the Hebrew being less generally understood, and the Greek more generally known, he made his communications in Greek. Having made his communications once, he leaves them to be studied and interpreted by his subjects ; to be studied in the same manner in which we study other writings, and to be interpreted by the same rules.

Those who are not acquainted with the original languages, may still have the benefit of this blessed volume translated into their vernacular tongues, by learned and pious men. Translations are made into almost all modern languages, which are extensively used, and many of them are made with the greatest possible care, and by men equally distinguished for their learning and piety. Our common translation was not only made with the greatest care, by men of distinguished learning and piety; but it has received the approbation of a long list of worthies of all orthodox denominations of Christians.

2. But in whatever method the fountain of divine truth is approached, we ought to be mainly anxious to drink of its healing waters. Whether we read the sacred Scriptures in their original or in our own vernacular tongues, we ought to be careful to understand them aright.

The truths of the Bible can do us good only as far as we understand and apply them. Just as far as we misunderstand the Bible, and mistake its meaning, we lose the benefits which it is designed to convey, and subject ourselves to the evils it was intended to correct.

While a right understanding of the Bible is admitted by all candid and intelligent students of it, to be of incalculable benefit and of inestimable value; and while so many loose and erroneous, and contradictory views are entertained on the subject of its communications, it is truly surprising that biblical interpretation has not been more generally a subject of investigation and inquiry.

Other branches of knowledge have received at least a share of public attention; this has by the multitude been almost entirely overlooked and neglected. Indeed it is hardly known by many a fierce religious disputant and wrangler in our land, that there is any such science as that of Biblical Interpretation.

But though neglected by the common people, believers and unbelievers, the most accurate biblical scholars have devoted to it a large share of their attention. In the seats of learning, and by the most successful cultivators of biblical knowledge, it has been studied with in-

creasing interest and benefit, both to themselves and the world with whom they communicate.

Lectures and other scientific instructions are given on this subject in our best theological seminaries, and the ablest expounders of God's word are devoting themselves to this study with singular assiduity and zeal.

3. An essay on the subject of biblical interpretation briefly explaining its fundamental principles and rules, and presenting them to view in their mutual relations and dependences, has long been needed and desired by at least a respectable portion of the Christian public. There is nothing of this kind in circulation at present in this country. Prof. Stuart's translation of Ernesti * is not adapted to interest and instruct the general reader, though deeply interesting to the accurate classical and biblical scholar.

4. In the present elementary treatise, an endeavour has been made to exhibit the fundamental principles and rules of biblical interpretation, in such a manner, as to place them within the reach and comprehension of every intelligent reader of the English language. These rules are accompanied with such illustrations and examples, as will sufficiently evince their truth, and show their application. The system of interpretation which is taught in this essay, is substantially the same as that of Ernesti; technical expressions however are generally avoided, as being ill adapted to instruct the great body of the Christian community for whose benefit this essay is more particularly designed.

5. In applying the following rules of interpretation to the Bible, it is to be remembered, that the holy word of God is to be approached with the profoundest reverence. Rash and hasty judgments are not for a moment to be tolerated in relation to those vitally important subjects, which the Bible unfolds to our view. Here, if any where,

* It is proper to mention that the only *complete* translation of Ernesti, is that executed by the Rev. C. H. Terrot—comprised in the 1st and 4th Vols. of the BIBLICAL CABINET, Edinr. 1832-3, to which the translator has added many learned and exceedingly valuable notes.

when examining this blessed book if ever, we are to proceed with deliberation, and judge with candour and caution. How much is lost by a neglect to do this, no tongue can tell, no pen describe, no pencil paint. Much of the error in faith and practice, with which the world is flooded, may be traced to this prolific source ; men leap to their conclusions on religious subjects, before they well understand the premises ; and those conclusions are such as suit their own misguided fancy, whether they can be educed from the word of God by fair means or foul.

Many undertake the study of the Bible with their ultimate conclusions all predetermined. They look into it, not to hear all that God is pleased to say for the purpose of deterring them from sin, and exciting them to seek holiness and heaven, but to see what they can find to establish themselves in this and that favourite opinion. That such persons should make much progress in sound scriptural knowledge is not to be expected. They do not labour to correct their errors and enlarge their views —a work which cannot be accomplished without labour. They only strive to confirm themselves in their preconceived opinions ;—in that they generally succeed, no matter how absurd those opinions may be.

6. Let the work of Biblical Interpretation be undertaken with honesty and humility. Human opinions are an empty sound, and even learning is a vain show when arrayed against the truths of the Bible.

Truth will stand,—it is destined to a glorious and universal triumph. It will bless and comfort all those who hold it in righteousness. It has outlived the scoffs of the most heaven-daring infidels. The mists of scepticism cannot conceal and essentially darken it,—the storms of persecution have been unable to sweep it away. Woe to the man who lifts up his puny hand against divine truth. In doing this he rebels against God, and treasures up wrath against the day of wrath, to be poured out upon his guilty soul.

Joy to that man who is on the side of truth. Truth will be on his side. If he has taken the part of truth against an angry and unbelieving world, truth will take

his part against all that may threaten to disturb his peace and destroy his soul. By God's truth he shall be sanctified, and, being sanctified, shall enjoy a blissful eternity with him whose words are truth—whose favour is life—whose loving-kindness is better than life.

The work of Biblical Interpretation is easy to the candid, attentive, and prayerful inquirer. By such the principles and leading rules of this interesting science will be readily apprehended. To the captious and ca-villing they will be more difficult of acquisition; but yet I do not despair of affording them some aid, if they will patiently examine the subject by the light of their good common sense, to see if these things are so.

SECTION II.

THE RULES OR LAWS OF INTERPRETATION.*

WHAT IS FIRST TO BE DONE.

1. The first business of an interpreter is to determine the meaning of words. No communication can be correctly understood or explained without an accurate knowledge of the meaning of the words in which it is expressed. If one or more important words of a communication are misapprehended, and wrong ideas attached to them by the reader or hearer, the communication will be so far misunderstood and wrongly interpreted. Language cannot be correctly interpreted without the most careful attention to words, for the purpose of ascertaining their precise meanings. Negligence here is the cause of many errors, and is of itself highly criminal; and yet we are not unfrequently guilty of it to a very high degree in the study of the Bible, the most important, and in some respects the most difficult of all studies.

* See BIBLICAL CABINET, Vol. VII. p. 129, &c.

2. DEFINITION OF THIS SCIENCE.

Interpretation is the science which teaches how to ascertain and explain the true meaning of language. All intelligent persons are more or less familiar with the art of doing this, though few have ever studied minutely its principles. The interpretation of language is so intimately connected with the use of it, that every man is compelled to make himself in some measure master of the art ; and yet no man can be completely master of this, any more than of any other art, without an accurate acquaintance with its principles and rules.

3. GENERAL PRINCIPLES RELATING TO THE MEANING OF SINGLE WORDS.*

1. Every word has some meaning, either of itself, or else as qualifying the meaning of other words, and pointing out their mutual relations and dependencies. The only use of words is to stand for ideas, and to serve as a medium for communicating them. If, therefore, any word had no meaning, it would be entirely useless.

The meaning and power of words is determined by usage and custom. There is necessarily a kind of general agreement among those who use any particular language, that particular words shall stand for particular ideas and objects. Thus man, time, earth, heaven, &c. stand for particular objects, and designate them in distinction from all others, by the general consent of those who use the English language.

2. Most words have more than one meaning, or admit of some modifications of the general idea for which they stand.

Thus *heat* denotes, first, a substance which exists in the natural world, and which enters into the composition of natural bodies ; secondly, the sensation produced by

* See Pareau's Principles of Interpretation, BIBLICAL CABINET, Vol. VIII. p. 232—40.

that substance on the animal frame ; thirdly, animal excitement, ardour.

So the word *spirit* denotes, first, animal excitement, ardour—as when we say of soldiers, they fought with great spirit ; secondly, the soul of man or of other creature, an incorporeal thinking being—as when we speak of the spirit of man going upward to God at death, when we say that God is a spirit, that he maketh his angels spirits, &c. ; thirdly, temper, disposition—as when we say of a man, that he shewed a good spirit or a bad spirit, meaning evidently that he shewed a good or bad disposition or state of mind, a good or bad temper.

Most, if not all the principal words in our language, as well as those of other languages, have more than one meaning, or at least some diversity of signification growing out of the same general idea.

The different meanings of the same word are connected together by some general relations,—such as similarity, the relation of cause to the effect, and effect to the cause, &c.

The fact that many words have more meanings than one, deserves special consideration. Many persons too, often overlook it ; and having proved that a word sometimes, and in some connections, has a particular meaning, infer that it must at all times, and in all places, have the same meaning. Such pretended proof is entirely fallacious. The fact that a word has one particular meaning in one connection, and in relation to one subject, is no proof at all that it has the same meaning in a different connection and in relation to a different subject.

In view of this subject, it is obvious that an interpreter ought to familiarize himself with all the different meanings of important words, in order to be fully qualified for the business of interpretation ;—otherwise he will be in great danger of mistake, in applying the meanings he is familiar with, where others were intended to be conveyed.

3. No word has more than one meaning in one and the same place. Though it may have twenty meanings in different places, it can have but one of them in any one

place. The correctness of this proposition will appear from a careful inspection of any part of language, and from a consideration of its very nature. When I use a particular name to designate a particular object, I wish it to be understood as standing for that object and no other. If either of the principal words of a simple sentence had two meanings, that sentence would express two simple ideas ;—if two of them had two meanings at the same time, that sentence would express four simple ideas. A language constructed on this principle would be in the highest degree confused. It would be an anomaly among the languages of the earth, and entirely unfit for the purposes of social intercourse and instruction.

4. As many words have different meanings, the question naturally arises, How shall we determine which of those meanings is intended in any particular passage ?

Answer. The most common meaning is always to be chosen where the nature of the subject or context does not clearly indicate another. Where different meanings are equally common, the nature of the subject or context must always decide which are to be taken. Thus in the sentence, "God is a spirit," we have the word *spirit*, which is used in different senses. The nature of the subject clearly indicates which of the meanings is intended here,—namely, that God is an incorporeal thinking being. The other meanings of this word, though common, would not suit this passage at all, and therefore we, with propriety, infer that they could not have been intended by the author of the declaration.

5. Most words are capable of being used figuratively to express different ideas from those to which they are ordinarily applied. A word is used in a figurative sense when it is applied to some object or action of which it is not the proper name. Thus we say that anger burns, sin is a venomous disease—where burns and venomous disease are used figuratively ; and the meaning is, that anger is excited, and that sin is like a venomous disease in its effects.

The most important figurative expressions, and those which occasion most difficulty to the interpreters, are

included under the following heads—the Metaphor, the Allegory, and Metonymy.*

A metaphor is a word expressing similitude, without any expressed sign of comparison, as God is a consuming fire,—meaning that God is like a consuming fire in certain particulars. Metaphorical expressions are very common, both in the sacred Scriptures and in other writings.

An allegory is a continued metaphor. It differs from a metaphor only in being drawn out to a greater length. As there is an implied comparison in every metaphor, so in an allegory the subject of discourse is illustrated by a familiar representation of something else, resembling that subject in some of its properties or circumstances. The 80th Psalm contains one of the most beautiful allegories in the language. It commences in the 8th verse, and ends with the 16th :—

“ Thou hast brought a vine out of Egypt,
Thou hast cast out the heathen, I planted it,
Thou preparedst room before it,” &c.

In this allegory, God’s chosen people are compared to a vine; and by the description of this supposed vine, several facts in their history are forcibly brought to mind and illustrated. The parables of the New Testament are allegorical representations, in which the familiar incidents of common life are made to illustrate important religious truths.

Metonymy is the use of one word for another, as cause for effect, whole for a part, container for contained, &c. As “ he bare our sins in his own body on the tree,”—that is, bare the effects or penalty of our sins. “ As often as ye drink of this cup,”—that is, of the liquor contained in it. “ There went out to him all Judea and Jerusalem, and all the region round about Jordan, and were baptized of him,”—that is, there went out all the people of Jerusalem, Judea, &c.

* See this subject discussed at great length in BIBLICAL CABINET, Vol. I. Ernesti’s Principles; also Vol. VIII. Pareau’s Principles of Interpretation.

6. The design of figurative language is to illustrate, embellish, and enforce. It is of very great utility in contributing both to the copiousness, beauty, and force of language, and renders it a much more perfect vehicle of thought than it could otherwise be. Some writers use figurative language more sparingly than others. Poetry abounds more in figurative language than prose. The oriental writers generally use figurative expressions in greater profusion than those of other nations. The sacred Scriptures abound in figurative language more than almost any other writings of equal extent. On this account the biblical interpreter ought to be well acquainted with the principles of figurative language, and the laws by which it is to be interpreted.

4. HOW TO DISTINGUISH LITERAL FROM FIGURATIVE LANGUAGE.*

1. The literal meaning of words is never to be departed from without evident reason and necessity. To interpret words on all occasions in figurative senses, because they are sometimes or indeed often used so, would be one of the grossest abuses of language, and the most entire perversion of reason. An intelligent writer does not introduce figurative expressions in such a way as to leave room to doubt whether they are figurative or not. That a word will admit of being interpreted in a figurative sense is not a sufficient reason for interpreting it so. It ought not to admit of a different interpretation, without evident violence being done to the language, in order that its claim to be considered figurative may be made good. Such is always the case with figurative language. It cannot, without manifest violence being done to it, be interpreted literally.

2. Words are to be considered figurative when there is manifest incongruity between the subject spoken of, and the affirmation made respecting it,—as when corporeal and incorporeal, animate and inanimate, rational

* See BIBLICAL CABINET, Vol. I.

and irrational, &c. are conjoined. Thus Christ says of himself, " I am the true vine," " the living bread;"—here is a conjunction of animate and inanimate. " Wisdom crieth without;"—crieth expresses the act of a living agent, and is applied to wisdom, which is inanimate, by a figure of speech called personification. Anger burns or is kindled ;—here is a conjunction of anger, an incorporeal object, with burns, which expresses the state of a corporeal or material object. Whenever an expression would be manifestly false or absurd, if understood literally, and makes a good sense if understood figuratively, we are to consider it figurative. Thus Christ said of the sacramental bread, " This is my body." This declaration, if understood literally, would be false and absurd. No logic could make out that bread is identical with a living human body ; and such was the body of Christ when he made the declaration referred to. But if we consider bread as being a figurative representation of the Redeemer's body, the sense of the passage is good, agreeing both with the subject and context. We therefore conclude that it is figurative ; and so of like expressions generally.

3. A word is frequently known to be used in a figurative sense, by a definitive clause, expressing in a literal sense the idea intended to be conveyed by the figure. As in the sentence, " We being dead in trespasses and sins," &c.—dead is known to be used in a figurative sense, by the phrase in trespasses and sins, which indicates literally the kind of death intended, and shews the word to be used in a figurative and not in its literal sense.

4. When different words, and those of different significations, are applied to the same subject, though that subject is an unknown one, we may justly infer that some of them at least are to be understood figuratively. Thus the change that takes place in becoming a Christian, is called being born again, being converted, renewed after the image of God, &c. ; some of which must of course be figurative representations of that change.

5. When the same words, or those of similar import, are every where in the Bible used in reference to any

particular subject, though that subject is otherwise an unknown one, we may infer that they are to be interpreted literally. Thus the future punishment of the wicked is represented by various terms and forms of expression, all of which unequivocally denote suffering ; —we therefore infer that punishment will literally be inflicted. The doctrine of the resurrection of the body at the last day stands on a foundation equally firm. It is referred to in various passages of Scripture, and by various modes of expression ; but all indicating the same thing, and expressing substantially the same idea. Thus resurrection of the dead—of the body—being quickened or made alive, are expressions constantly used, in reference to an event to take place at the end of the world.

This rule is one of very general application, and of great practical importance in relation to such subjects as do not come within the sphere of our observation, and for a knowledge of which we are indebted solely to divine revelation.

5. HOW TO ASCERTAIN THE LITERAL MEANING OF WORDS.

1. The meaning of words is determined by custom and general usage, as we have already had occasion to remark. As far as any individual departs from this usage in the expression of his ideas, his communication becomes obscure, and his language incorrect. No intelligent writer intentionally departs from it without what he supposes to be good reason for doing so, and explicitly pointing out how far he does it.

The correct and true meaning of words as they are generally understood by those who use them, is that which every intelligent writer expects to be understood as expressing. This he aims to express, and to this he endeavours to adhere. In relation to this subject the sacred writers are to be placed at least on an equality with others. They have not used language with less accuracy and propriety than intelligent uninspired writers.

2. The first and simplest means of ascertaining the

meaning of words is by definition. In giving the definition of a word, a man gives his individual testimony in favour of that meaning, or those meanings which he assigns, being the true meaning or meanings of the words. Such testimony is to be estimated like all other testimony, and is more or less valuable, according to the character of the witness. When a writer defines his own terms, they are of course to be interpreted in his writings according to his definition of them, unless he manifestly departs from it. Writers generally define such terms as they think will not be well understood by those for whom their works are designed, without definitions.

Dictionaries are highly useful to the student and interpreter, in exhibiting the principal meanings of words as they were understood by their respective authors. They ought to be constantly consulted as repositories of valuable knowledge on this subject.

3. The nature of the subject treated of, affords very essential service in limiting and defining the meaning of words. When words have different meanings, we generally infer from the nature of the subject, which of those meanings is to be taken in any particular passage. The facility with which we do this is truly remarkable, and affords us just occasion for wonder and admiration. Notwithstanding that most of the words we use have different meanings, yet we discover almost intuitively, which of the meanings is intended in any particular application of them. So that language may be considered almost as definite, as if every word had its own definite signification and no other. The definiteness and precision of language, taken in connection with the indefiniteness of meaning belonging to single words, may well be accounted among the wonders of literature.

4. Words are often illustrated and explained by examples, where there is no logical definition, and where the nature of the subject would not be sufficiently clear to afford a clue to the true meaning. Examples illustrative of the meaning of words, are common in almost every kind of writing, and deserve the particular attention of every student and interpreter. Thus we learn the

meaning of the word prayer as much from the examples of the performance of this duty recorded in the Bible, as from any other source. The same may be said of piety, faith, repentance, and many other of the most important terms, in which the Divine will is treasured up, and by which it is made known to men.

5. A comparison of parallel passages, together with a careful attention to the context, is another and effectual means of eliciting the true meaning of some words, which could not be otherwise ascertained. Those passages of the sacred Scriptures are parallel, which manifestly relate to the same subject and express similar sentiments. The same sentiment may be expressed in different terms, in two or more passages, but more definitely and perspicuously in some passages than in others. The same fact is sometimes related in two or more different passages, and related more fully in some than in others. A comparison of parallel passages is one of the most effectual means of acquiring an accurate and extensive knowledge of the precise and accurate meaning of many of those words, by which the doctrines and duties of religion are taught.

The parallel passages on prayer are those which relate to the subject of prayer, and explain and enforce the duty; those on the day of final judgment, are those which relate to the subject of a final judgment, and describe the nature and circumstances of it, &c.

Care ought to be taken to determine whether the passages which we examine as parallel, are truly so or not. There may be a mere verbal parallelism, when the subjects treated of are entirely different. In this way multitudes suffer themselves to be bewildered and deceived. By considering passages of Scripture which relate to the final judgment, parallel to those which relate to the infliction of temporal judgments, multitudes have endeavoured to explain away the doctrine of a final judgment, to the very great detriment of religion. So by considering passages of Scripture which relate to the subject of the future punishment of the wicked, parallel to those which relate to the infliction of temporal punishment,

many have endeavoured to explain that doctrine away. In both the above cases parallelism has been assumed when it does not really exist, and the premises being incorrect it is not strange that the conclusion should be false.

6. HOW TO ASCERTAIN THE FIGURATIVE MEANING OF WORDS.*

1. General usage in regard to figurative expressions, is the general rule, according to which they are to be interpreted. This usage is remarkably uniform, both in sacred and profane writers, in regard to a large portion of figurative language.

In the sacred Scriptures light is universally an emblem of prosperity and happiness, and sometimes of knowledge and virtue. Darkness represents misery, ignorance, and sin. Fire has two figurative meanings. It is a common emblem of God's consuming wrath, and also of the Holy Spirit's purifying influences. These meanings, however, are always kept distinct in the sacred volume. The "refiner's fire," through which the pious are represented as passing, and the "baptism of the Holy Ghost and of fire," are as distinct and different from "the lake of fire and brimstone, the place where the worm dieth not and the fire is not quenched," as heaven is from hell, or as happiness is from misery.

The meaning of the Scripture figurative language is as determinate and precise, as that of any other part of the sacred volume; and is rendered so, by the uniformity of the sacred writers in using particular figurative expressions to denote and illustrate particular ideas and those only. This uniformity in the use of figurative language is founded in the nature of things, and is common to all languages and all writers.

2. Where figurative expressions are of double or doubtful meaning, they must be interpreted according to

* See Beckhaus on the Tropical Language of New Test.,—BIBLICAL CABINET, Vol. II. p. 296.

the nature of the subject treated of. Where the general usage of the sacred writers has given different meanings to particular figurative expressions, or where the figure is in its nature indefinite in its meaning, the subject must necessarily decide which of the possible meanings is the one intended. Where figurative expressions have different established meanings, they ought to be carefully borne in mind. It is a very great fault, as well as folly, to urge a particular meaning on a metaphor in all places, because it sometimes has that meaning ; or because considered without any relation to the subject in hand, it may have it ; and yet cases of this error being fallen into, are by no means rare.

3. The context may be consulted with advantage for the purpose of determining the meaning of figurative language, just as it is, in regard to the literal meaning of words. In like manner does a comparison of parallel passages throw light on many figurative expressions, which without this illustration would appear dark and doubtful.

4. In the explanation of figurative language, substitute literal expressions for figurative, expressing what is supposed to be the true sense of the passage. Wherever a figurative expression is rightly understood, it is easy to express the sense of it in plain language ; where we find ourselves unable to reduce figurative to plain language, we may justly conclude that we do not understand it. The endeavour to substitute plain language, is useful in leading us to investigate with more precision and accuracy than we should be likely otherwise to do, the expressions we endeavour thus to change and simplify. Examples of figurative language changed into plain. "I am the true vine ; ye are the branches." That is ; I am like the true vine, and ye are like branches in relation to me.

" This is their condemnation, that light has come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil." Here are several figures blended together. Light is a metaphor used to denote truth or knowledge, which is personified and represented

as coming into the world like a person. Darkness is also a metaphor, and signifies ignorance or error. The literal expressions being substituted for the figurative, the passage would read thus: "This is their condemnation that truth has come into the world, and men loved error rather than truth, because their deeds were evil." There is still an ellipsis to be supplied in order to make the passage literal, as the word condemnation is used by metonymy for the cause of condemnation. With the alteration it would read, "This is the cause of their condemnation," &c.

If, on making a substitution of plain for figurative language, the expression does not harmonize with the context, and with the nature of the subject, it may be inferred that the substitution is incorrect. One of the advantages of substituting plain for figurative language, is to facilitate the application of the before-mentioned rules of interpretation.

7. HOW TO ASCERTAIN THE MEANING OF ALLEGORIES.*

1. First, inquire into the design of the allegory, the purpose for which it was introduced. This will generally be explained in the context; and when no particular declaration of it is made, may be inferred from the circumstances and connection in which it is introduced. To disregard the evident or declared design with which an allegory is introduced, is as great an error in interpretation, as it is to disregard entirely the proposition which an argument is intended to prove in the consideration of that argument. An allegory is generally only a part of the discourse in which it occurs, and is to be investigated in its connection with the other parts of that discourse, and not independently of them. Having ascertained the design of an allegory, as far as it can be determined from the context, next proceed to examine the allegory itself.

2. Let the different parts of an allegory be explained

* See BIBLICAL CABINET, Vol. I.

in accordance to the main design. Most allegories are introduced for the purpose of illustrating some particular point, and are to be considered as constituting one whole illustration, not necessarily a collection of illustrations. Thus the parable of the prodigal son was introduced by our Saviour into one of his discourses, to illustrate the benignity and kindness with which God receives the repenting sinner. The parable of the good Samaritan was introduced to illustrate and enforce the duty of universal beneficence. The different parts of these parables, therefore, are to be interpreted in subserviency to their main design.

3. As no two objects resemble each other in every particular, so we are not to expect the subject of an allegory to bear a perfect resemblance to the subject intended to be illustrated by it in every particular that may be mentioned respecting it. The subject of an allegory is always supposed to have some resemblance to the subject which it is intended to illustrate. This resemblance, like that in every other case, consists in some properties or circumstances being the same in both.

It is a very common fault in the interpretation of allegories to seek for too many points of resemblance, and to press the analogy on which the allegory is founded too far.

4. The application of allegories to purposes of instruction and argument, has been practised extensively, both in sacred and profane writings. Many of the inimitable discourses of our Saviour were made up mostly of allegorical illustrations. The allegories of the Bible are of unparalleled beauty and excellence, so that the frequency with which they are introduced in the sacred volume, contributes not a little to enhance its value, both as a literary production, and as a manual of instruction.

Allegorical discourses are peculiarly adapted to encounter prejudice and opposition; and they have very frequently been made use of for this purpose in the Sacred Scriptures and in other writings.

5. The foregoing rules for the interpretation of allegories may be illustrated by the following example, Luke xviii. 2—8.

“ There was in a city, a judge which feared not God, neither regarded man. And there was a widow in that city, and she came unto him, saying, avenge me of my adversary. And he would not for a while; but afterward he said within himself, though I fear not God, nor regard man, yet because this widow troubleth me, I will avenge her, lest by her continual coming she weary me. And the Lord said, hear what the unjust judge saith. And shall not God avenge his own elect that cry day and night to him, though he bear long with them? I tell you, he will avenge them speedily.”

1. As to the design of this parable, it is explicitly declared in the context; “ that men ought always to pray, and not to faint.”

2. The poor widow asking redress of a judge, represents the case of a sinner asking favours of God. Both are alike helpless and dependent. The success of the widow’s importunity is an encouragement to sinners to be importunate with God.

The fact that the judge was unjust, renders the case a peculiarly strong and encouraging one; if an unjust judge would yield to the importunity of a feeble, helpless widow, whom he cared nothing about, how much more would a just God, who cherishes a tender concern for his children, listen to their importunate cries and grant their reasonable requests!

The rules that have already been given for determining the meaning of words must of course settle most questions respecting the doctrines of the Bible. The doctrines of the Christian religion are revealed to us by the use of terms, which need only to be explained correctly, in order that the doctrines should be correctly apprehended. But to obtain still farther aid, we may apply, where the case admits of it, the following rules.

8. DOCTRINAL INTERPRETATION,—HISTORICAL. *

1. When a doctrine or fact is clearly stated in the sa-

* See BIBLICAL CABINET, Vol. VIII. Pareau’s Principles of Interpretation, p. 271.

cred Scriptures and indubitably taught, other passages of ambiguous or doubtful meaning, relating to the same subject, are always to be explained in accordance with that doctrine or fact. The propriety and necessity of this rule arise from the fact, that we are never particular to avoid ambiguous expressions, and those considered by themselves of doubtful meaning, in relation to a subject that has been fully explained, and may be presumed to be understood. What is known in relation to such a subject is supposed to afford means of ascertaining with certainty and precision which of the meanings is to be taken in cases of ambiguity, and what is the true meaning in cases of obscurity. For example, the doctrine of the necessity of faith in Christ during the present life, in order to the attainment of salvation, is clearly stated, and definitely and indubitably taught in the New Testament. "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved ;—he that believeth not shall be damned." "There remaineth a rest to the people of God. Let us labour therefore to enter into that rest, lest any man fall after the same example of *unbelief*,"—that is, after the example of the rebellious Jews, whose unbelief was the cause of their being cut off in the wilderness, and not being permitted to enter the land of Canaan. So now, through unbelief, men become liable to be cut off in their sins, and lose the enjoyment of heaven. Again we are taught, that "Christ died for all men, especially for them that believe ;" that he "tasted death for every man," &c. These passages taken by themselves are ambiguous, or rather indefinite, and may be understood as teaching that Christ died absolutely to save all men without regard to character or conduct ; or that he died to make it possible for all men to be saved, if they would accept salvation on such reasonable conditions as he might see fit to propose. The doctrine of the necessity of faith to the attainment of salvation, which is clearly of scriptural authority, shews the latter to be the true meaning, and the former to be entirely inadmissible. This rule is to be used cautiously, and yet it is one of very general application. The doctrine or fact which is made a rule for the interpretation

of ambiguous and obscure passages and such as are indefinite, ought to be investigated with great accuracy and care, otherwise we shall be liable to great mistakes in making our own unfounded conjectures instead of God's undoubted truth, both an article of faith and a rule of interpretation. A single mistake in making an erroneous doctrine a rule of interpretation, may lead to the most pernicious perversion of a multitude of Scripture texts.

2. Authentic history furnishes another source of information in relation to the interpretation of the sacred writings, which is in some cases at least of very essential service. Many subjects which are imperfectly explained in the sacred volume were more fully expounded in the oral instructions of the apostles and other inspired teachers; and some forms of expression which are ambiguous and obscure now, were perfectly plain when the sacred writings were first committed to the church. In many cases, therefore, it is a matter of considerable importance to ascertain what were the usages of the apostles, and of the churches in apostolic times; and how particular passages were understood by the primitive followers of Christ.

So far as any doctrine can be proved by historical evidence to be of apostolical origin, that historical truth may be relied on as a safe rule of interpretation. For example: We learn from authentic history that the first day of the week was observed by the primitive Christians as a Sabbath,—that the churches planted in different countries, and by different apostles, concurred in this observance. As it is utterly improbable that they should have concurred in such an observance, unless it had been authorized by apostolic authority, we refer the institution of the Christian Sabbath to the apostles, on the ground of the historical evidence in its favour. The observance of the first day of the week must have been an apostolical usage, or it could not have been universal in the primitive church. This knowledge of the usage of the apostles throws additional light on some passages in the New Testament, which to many at least would be otherwise obscure. Finding the notices of the first day

of the week interspersed through the New Testament to be in perfect accordance with this historical fact, and such as cannot well be reconciled with any other hypothesis, we conclude with as much certainty in favour of the divine origin and authority of the Christian Sabbath, as we do in favour of any other part of the Christian system.

9. ENTIRE DISCOURSES AND PARAGRAPHS.

The different parts of an entire discourse or paragraph ought to be studied in their proper connections and dependences.

The limb of a discourse, like that of the human frame when amputated from the body to which it belongs, may become an incumbrance in the pursuit of knowledge, rather than a means of hastening and facilitating our progress.

In the study of the sacred Scriptures, consider first the nature of the composition, whether it consists of prose or poetry, whether it is historical or doctrinal, &c. It would be absurd to interpret prose and poetry, historical and doctrinal composition, by the same rules, without any regard to the peculiar nature of the composition. Poetry is to be interpreted as poetry, prose as prose—preceptive writing is to be interpreted as being preceptive, and history as history. The same general rules of interpretation apply to sacred history as to profane, and to sacred poetry as to profane, &c.

Having determined what kind of composition any particular portion of the sacred Scriptures is you are investigating, next determine the natural divisions. Every discourse, whether historical or doctrinal, every poem and every prophecy, has a beginning, middle, and end. These ought to be distinctly noted. The beginning of a discourse ought to be connected with the middle and end, and the middle and end ought to be connected with the beginning. The force and beauty of many passages is entirely lost to multitudes from a neglect of this direction. It is not to be taken for granted that the be-

giving of a chapter is in all cases the beginning of a discourse, or even of a paragraph. This is in many instances far from being the case. The Bible ought to be studied without reference to the division into chapters. The natural divisions are to be determined just as we would determine them if there were no artificial divisions at all. Divisions of chapters frequently occur where there is no natural division, and natural divisions still more frequently occur where there is no division into chapters in the common Bible.

The present division of the Bible into chapters was made by Cardinal Hugo, a Dominican, in the year of our Lord 1240. The further and more minute division of the Bible into verses was introduced in 1445, by a distinguished Jewish Rabbi, Mordecai Nathan. The object of these divisions being introduced, was to lay the foundation for a concordance, and to facilitate references to different parts of the Bible. That object they have subserved admirably well; but at the same time they have been highly injurious, by disjointing parts of discourses which are intimately connected, and separating passages into different chapters which cannot be correctly understood without being studied in connection with each other.

10. THE INTERPRETATION OF THE BIBLE CONSIDERED AS A TRANSLATION.*

The rules that have been given for interpreting the sacred Scriptures, apply equally to any language. They apply to the original Hebrew and Greek, and to every translation. But the best translations are imperfect; and the scholar that does not understand the original languages, needs to be informed how he may ascertain the correctness of the translations he uses in any particular passage. For if the translation of any particular passage is incorrect, the meaning deduced from it by the best rules of interpretation must be wrong. The diffi-

* See BIBLICAL CABINET, Vol. I.

culties in which this subject is involved have, no doubt, discouraged some from even endeavouring to settle their belief in regard to important doctrines of the Bible. They have furnished a plausible excuse for scepticism and error to such as were quite willing to remain in the dark on religious subjects.

But honest inquirers need not despair. Truth may be ascertained in regard to this subject, as far as is necessary for the important purposes of faith and practice.

Rules by which those unacquainted with the original languages of the Scriptures may decide on the correctness of the translation.

1. The general agreement of commentators in regard to the correctness or incorrectness of any particular passage may be safely relied on as indicating the truth; because such an agreement cannot exist, except where the case is one of undoubted certainty. If several different commentators, skilled in the original languages, decide that a passage is correctly translated, we have the strongest reason to confide in their decision, especially if there is no counter testimony. This rule lays a foundation for confidence in regard to the great body of the sacred Scriptures. Commentators of every respectable denomination of Christians, and many persons who have joined no particular sect, have generally acquiesced in the decision that our common English Bible is correct, and that, considered as a whole, it is a faithful representation of the sense of the original. This agreement is general and decisive;—cases of dissent from it are partial and particular.

2. In all cases where the correctness of the English translation is called in question, we are to decide according to evidence, and not arbitrarily, as is too often done. Evidence is sometimes found in the context, either for or against the common translation. Especially when a new translation is recommended, ought its agreement or disagreement with the context to be carefully observed. A translation which does not agree with the context

must be wrong. This disagreement is decisive evidence against it.

3. A translation which does not make sense must of course be wrong. To maintain the contrary is a high impeachment of the sacred volume. All that Scripture, which has been given by inspiration of God, makes a good and consistent sense in the original, and must, in all cases when correctly translated, be of the same character.

4. When a particular translation makes a good and consistent sense, and does not disagree with the context, and is at the same time a matter of dispute among biblical scholars and commentators,—first take the opinions of the critics and commentators in question, and consider on which side there appears to be the most learning, candour, integrity, and piety ;—that side on which there is a preponderance of these qualifications is probably right. Secondly, examine the reasons given in favour of the translation in question or against it. If these reasons are substantial, we may safely yield our assent,—otherwise not.

A commentator who dissents from the common translation of any particular passage, and proposes a different one, is bound to give substantial reasons for that dissent, and for the translation he recommends. These reasons may, in most cases, be apprehended with perfect clearness by such as are unacquainted with the original languages, and will afford very important aid in resolving difficulties of this kind.

Whoever attends to these rules will seldom be involved in very great perplexity as to any thing affecting materially the fundamental articles of the Christian faith. In relation to those numerous passages of Scripture in which these articles are taught, either directly or by implication, there is a general and happy agreement among the great body of sound biblical scholars, and especially among that portion of them that are eminent for piety as well as learning.

5. If any man finds himself involved in doubt as to the translation of any particular passage or passages of Scrip-

ture, and is unable to obtain the works of biblical commentators and expositors, as directed above, let him go to a well-instructed clergyman of any respectable branch of the Christian church, and ask instruction in the case, and he will seldom fail of obtaining it.

Knowledge is to be had, if men will take the trouble to apply for it; and surely none can desire it on easier terms.

I do not propose that any man's *ipse dixit* should be taken as a rule of faith or of interpretation. To pursue such a course would be to perpetuate erroneous interpretations indefinitely. But I do recommend that those who have not the means of extensive and accurate information on this subject, should allow those who have to direct their minds to principles and facts which may lead them to truth, and protect them from error in all matters of vital importance. Error is the child of ignorance, and ignorance in most cases springs from a voluntary and criminal neglect of the means of improvement and information. God has made it our duty to know the truth, and has amply furnished us with the means of gaining this knowledge. No man need be a sceptic, none need be an unbeliever, if he will consent to use honestly, and diligently, and prayerfully, those means of instruction which God has placed within his reach, and urged upon his acceptance.

SECTION III.

THE RATIONALISTIC MODE OF INTERPRETATION. *

1. Many persons talk a great deal of the Scriptures being according to reason, and take considerable liberties in the interpretation of them, for the purpose of making them speak such language as they think is reasonable.

* See a brief view of the Rationalistic system in Professor Tholuck's Preface to his Commentary on the Romans,—BIBLICAL CABINET, Vol. V.

The mode of interpretation adopted by such is in some respects peculiar. *The fundamental principle of it is, that the sacred Scriptures are accordant to reason.*

This principle is not pretended to be applicable to men's productions, because men are liable to hold sentiments, and make statements, that are untrue and unreasonable; and therefore the fact that a particular doctrine is unreasonable, is no proof that men have not held and inculcated it in their writings.

2. Let us investigate this rule. The sacred Scriptures must be accordant to reason. What is reason? If reason is a rule of interpretation it ought to be well understood. The word *reason* has two principal meanings:—1. It designates the foundation or cause of an opinion or conclusion,—as we think thus and so, for this and that reason. Every correct opinion is based on some sufficient reason, which is the cause of our holding it.

We believe that Columbus discovered America; and the reason for this belief, or the foundation on which it rests, is the fact that the discovery of it is universally attributed to him, especially by those acquainted with the history of the times in which he lived.

To believe without reasons is denominated unreasonable, and is well entitled to this denomination.

Those sentiments, therefore, are reasonable for which reasons of sufficient weight can be assigned;—in this connection, reasons are nearly the same as evidences. 2. The word *reason* also designates that power of the mind by which we distinguish truth from error, and gain knowledge by comparison and inference. We employ this faculty in all our investigations, whether of the Bible and Bible-truth, or of any other subject. No matter what system of interpretation we adopt, reason is the faculty, in the exercise of which we apply the rules of that system to the interpretation of language.

The true sense of the sacred Scriptures, is that sense which, in the right and intelligent use of reason, is educated from them. This, however, is by no means making reason a rule of interpretation,—it is only making it an

instrument, by which the acknowledged rules of the art are applied.

3. From a consideration of the definitions of reason here given, which will be found to be correct, and in conformity with the best authorities, it appears highly improper to make reason a rule of interpretation. The fact that any thing is asserted in the Bible, without any collateral evidence, is itself a reason for our belief, and one that amply justifies the highest confidence man can repose in any assertion.

This subject may be farther and more fully illustrated by the following propositions:—

1. Knowledge is a safe rule of interpretation, and one of universal application. Any interpretation of Scripture which gives a meaning contradictory to our absolute knowledge must be wrong. Though in other respects the meaning in question might appear to be the true one, yet the fact that it contradicts our certain knowledge proves it to be false. The reason of this rule is obvious. Men are never expected to speak and write with as much precision upon subjects well understood, as upon those which are obscure. In reference to such subjects, we use words in figurative and uncommon senses, as best suits our convenience, and expect them to be interpreted as the nature of the subject may require,—neither are we disappointed in our expectations.

In reference to subjects which are difficult, or such as are not generally understood, we find it necessary to use words with more precision and accuracy, in order to make our communications intelligible. This distinction, in regard to the loose and accurate use of words, obtains in all correct writers, sacred and profane, and ought to be more generally known and regarded than it is. Christ is called a son of David, meaning, as every one knows, a descendant of that prince;—a vine, that is, metaphorically like a vine;—a corner stone, like a corner stone in relation to the church;—a rock of offence, that is, a cause of offence to the unbelieving and disobedient,—all which are perfectly intelligible, because the subject to which they relate

is too well understood to allow of mistake in regard to their meaning.

2. As every part of the sacred Scriptures is equally true, those passages which contain apparent contradictions must be so explained, as to harmonize with each other. Apparent contradictions are often far from being real ones. The most rash and superficial students of the inspired volume, are those who find the most difficulties of this kind. Patient investigation of the meaning of the words, of the context and subject treated of, will generally demonstrate the apparent contradictions of the Bible to be perfectly harmonious, and in perfect agreement with each other.

3. Preconceived opinion which does not amount to knowledge, cannot with propriety be made a rule of interpretation. The natural world presents many objects, and the course of Divine Providence unfolds many events, which we did not expect to find, and which, when observed, awaken our wonder and surprise. It is but reasonable therefore to expect in the economy of grace, and in the moral and religious system of the universe, many things exceedingly strange to us, and entirely different from what we should have thought best to have. The Bible explains the moral and religious system of the world. The design of it is to teach what we could not learn from any other of the sources of knowledge in relation to the subject in question.

The fact, therefore, that some of the representations of the Bible are at variance with our preconceived opinions, and different from what we should think best, is no objection at all to the correctness and truth of them, but furnishes a substantial argument in favour of the fidelity and correctness of the inspired writers. This rule is directly opposed to the fundamental one of the rationalistic mode of interpretation. Those who talk so much of the sacred Scriptures being accordant to reason, do not mean simply that they must be accordant to certain knowledge and known truths. For respecting that, there is no dispute and cannot be. But they mean, that the sacred Scriptures must be accordant to those opinions, which do

not come under the denomination of known truths, but which are readily acquiesced in as being probable, without any *decisive* evidence in their favour. But happily for the cause of truth and piety, though unfortunately for the honour of this system of interpretation, in all cases where our knowledge of the subject under consideration is not sufficiently accurate and extensive to be a safe guide to interpretation, words are used in their most common and usual significations. This fact supersedes the necessity of any other rule of interpretation than the usual ones, for ascertaining the meaning of words. When men are treating of subjects not well or generally understood, they never use words in *uncommon* significations without giving the clearest intimation of the fact, and showing precisely what those significations are, unless they mean to bewilder and deceive their readers.

In relation to such subjects, they are compelled to use words with precision, and in their most usual meanings, in order to make their communications intelligible. In exact accordance to this principle as well as the other principles of language, the divinely inspired writings were composed. To assert the contrary, amounts to nothing less than an impeachment of the wisdom and goodness of God, and is unsupported by the least substantial evidence. Besides, so far as reference is had to the opinions of men in the interpretation of language, that reference must of course be to the opinions of contemporaries and countrymen, and not to those of later times, and of other lands. Hence the necessity of every interpreter of the Bible, acquainting himself as far as possible with the history of opinions in the times when the different parts of the sacred Scriptures were written.

The opinions of the Jews and heathen in relation to the state of the wicked after death, will serve as an illustration of this subject. In the times of our Saviour and the apostles, two of the principal sects of the Jews, all who believed in a future state, believed in the doctrine of the punishment of the wicked after death. The same doctrine was held by the most popular of the heathen philosophers, and was inculcated on the people generally.

We are therefore to consider the instructions of the New Testament as addressed to persons holding this sentiment, and to interpret them accordingly.

If believers in the doctrine of the future punishment of the wicked, would not naturally interpret the instructions of the New Testament as authorizing a belief in that sentiment and inculcating it, we are not to understand them as doing so. But if they would naturally, and necessarily put this construction on the communications relating to this subject in the New Testament, we must acknowledge it to be correct. For if Christ or the apostles had wished to discountenance the prevailing sentiment of the times in relation to the subject in question, they would doubtless have done it, in terms too unequivocal to be mistaken by any candid hearer or reader. And the fact that they have not discountenanced it, but have interspersed their instructions with expressions highly favourable to the sentiment in question, and have in many instances positively asserted that sentiment, if language may be allowed to have the same force in their mouths that it has in the mouths of others, is conclusive evidence of the strongest kind in favour of the doctrine.

From the foregoing remarks, the legitimate conclusion is, that the Rationalistic mode of interpretation is entirely incorrect, being based upon principles that are entirely false. Consequently the application of it to explain the holy Scriptures, is alike impious and delusive. It is impious, inasmuch as it implies the setting up of the fabric of human opinions against God's eternal truth, and in the place of it. It is delusive, inasmuch as it erects an impregnable wall of defence around the erroneous opinions and baseless conjectures of men, for the purpose of maintaining them in possession of the stolen honours of truth.

SECTION IV.

THE ALLEGORICAL MODE OF INTERPRETATION,
OR THEORY OF DOUBLE SENSES.*

1. The allegorical mode of interpretation is of very great antiquity. It was in use among the Jews before the Christian era. Philo was an allegorist; so were Pantaenus and Clemens Alexandrinus of the second century, and in the Christian church. Origin in the third century took greater liberties with this mode of interpretation, than any Christian teacher had done before him. Before his time all interpreters explained the narrations and laws contained in the Bible according to their literal meaning. Origin turned a large part of biblical history into fables, and many of the laws into allegories. In doing this he followed the track that had already been marked out in the school of Ammonius at the close of the preceding century.

Ammonius Saccas, an Alexandrine philosopher of the second century, opened a school near the close of the century, and laid the foundation of that sect of philosophers called the New Platonic.

His object was to bring all religions, and all sects of philosophers into harmony. He taught that philosophy was first produced and nurtured among the people of the east. That it was cultivated and disseminated in Egypt by Hermes, and that it passed thence into Greece, and was explained with tolerable accuracy and correctness by Plato. It is the opinion of many, that the pretended work of Hermes and Zoroaster originated in the schools of the New Platonic.

In order to reconcile the prevailing religions with his philosophical system, Ammonius turned the whole pretended history of the pagan gods into allegory. This system Origin applied with specifications and modifica-

* See BIBLICAL CABINET, Vol. I.

tions peculiar to himself, and borrowed from various sources to the interpretation of the sacred volume.

Preceding writers had resorted to allegories, principally to discover predictions of future events, and rules for the direction of life. He resorted to them principally to establish his favourite system of heathen philosophy on a scriptural basis.

The Platonic idea of a twofold world, a visible and invisible one, and the one emblematical of the other, lead him to search for a figurative description of the invisible world, in the inspired history of this. He supposed that as man was admitted to consist of three parts—a rational mind, a sensitive soul, and a visible body, so the Scriptures have a threefold sense—a literal, moral, and mystical or spiritual sense. The mystical or spiritual sense, he supposed, acquainted us with the nature, state, and history of the spiritual and heavenly world, which he believed to have been made after the same pattern as this.

The mystic sense he attributed to every part of the sacred Scriptures,—the literal sense was only partially diffused, according to his view, some passages having no literal meaning at all.

A similar system of allegorical interpretation has more recently been inculcated by Swedenborg. He attributes to the sacred Scriptures three senses, which he entitles the literal, spiritual, and celestial.

While both the systems here referred to have been generally discarded by the Christian church, multitudes in all ages have turned Scripture into allegory, for the purpose of rendering particular passages of them more significant than they would otherwise be, either in the prediction of future events, or in the communication of moral and religious instruction.

2. The allegorical system of interpretation is built upon what is called the doctrine of correspondences,—namely, that there is such a correspondence between natural and spiritual, terrestrial and celestial objects and events, as to make the former correct and perfect types of the latter. If the doctrine of a correspondence between natural and spiritual, terrestrial and celestial objects

and events, be admitted in its full extent, so that the one is an exact resemblance of the other, then all descriptions of natural objects and events, as well as those contained in Scripture, may be considered figurative of spiritual and heavenly things, and may be applied to represent such things with the utmost propriety. The principle is very broad and extensive in its application. It applies with as much force to profane as to sacred history; and, according to this system of philosophy; (for it deserves the appellation of a system of philosophy, rather than one of religion or of interpretation,) all profane history would be allegorical, and descriptive of spiritual and heavenly things, however ignorant the authors might be of any such meaning being attached to their language.

3. But the doctrine of correspondences is nowhere asserted in the Bible. The inspired writers have used figurative language just as they might be expected to do if no such correspondence existed; and the use of these figures, with which their writings abound, is fully authorized by that principle of general analogies, which is the foundation of metaphorical language among uninspired writers. Figurative language may be pressed too far. We are not to suppose that there is a perfect resemblance in every particular wherever there is a general one in some particulars. Things resemble each other which have some things in common. The more things they have in common, the greater is their resemblance.

Earth resembles heaven just as far as it has things in common with it. Body resembles mind just as far as it has properties in common with it. God resembles the sun, to which he is several times compared, just as far as he has properties and relations in common with it, and no farther. So light resembles knowledge as far as it has relations and properties in common with it. Light and vision are to the eye what knowledge is to the soul; —that is, their relations are analogous. But in this view of the subject, perfect resemblance of earthly to heavenly objects is not assumed;—neither is it necessary to assume it, in order to justify the analogical and figurative language of the sacred Scriptures.

4. Arguments generally adduced in favour of a double sense being attributed to the sacred Scriptures.

1. Unless we allow them to have other meanings than the plain and obvious one according to the common rules of interpretation, some parts of the sacred volume will become uninstructive and unimportant. Answer. The knowledge contained in the Bible, interpreted by the common rules of interpretation, is of the greatest extent and highest value. It is a fountain which the most powerful and active minds have been unable to fathom, and still more so, to exhaust. Explained on these principles only, it teaches the purest morality, and the sublimest theology. It discloses the only way of life and salvation, and points out the only effectual means of regaining the favour of God.

Those parts of the Bible, or those passages, for it is only to occasional passages that the remark can be applied, which seem unimportant to us, may have been highly important and useful when they were originally written, or may be still so in some future period of the world, without any aid being derived from the theory of double senses to render them so.

2. It is also urged, that on the hypothesis of double senses, the Bible is made more spiritual than on the other hypothesis. Answer. The word spiritual has three meanings. 1. Consisting of spirit ; as we say of the mind, it is a spiritual substance—a substance consisting of spirit. 2. Relating to spirit and the concerns of spirits, as we speak of spiritual enjoyments, spiritual world, &c. 3. Pious, religious ; as we say of a pious man, he is very spiritual, that is, he is very pious, devout.

The application of the term spiritual to the Bible, in the first sense, is absurd ; for it contradicts our intuitive perception. We know by the evidence of our senses that the different communications which compose the Bible, taken separately, and the whole taken collectively, are not spirit in the literal sense of that word. They do not consist of spirit, that is, they are not a living, reasoning and thinking being.

The word spiritual, in the second and third senses mentioned above, is strictly applicable to the sacred Scriptures, understood according to the common rules of interpretation. They relate principally to spirits, and the concerns and destinies of spirits : and are of a highly devotional tendency. Nay, in these senses they are spiritual in the highest degree ; that is to say, they are in the highest degree devotional, and relate entirely to spiritual concerns.

3. It is further urged that the theory of double senses is more in accordance with the divine character and operations than that of single senses.

Why enigmatical or allegorical discourses are more in accordance to the divine operations generally, than plain ones, it is difficult for a plain man to conceive.

God's communications must be in accordance to his attributes. One of his attributes is truth : His communications must therefore be true. One of his attributes is justice ; his communications and requirements must therefore be just. These are moral attributes, and give character to the divine communications, as they do to the other divine operations. The same may be said of wisdom, mercy, and other moral attributes of the divine character.

But you cannot with propriety add ; God is an Allegory, and therefore his communications must be allegorical—or that God is a spirit, and therefore his communications must consist of spirit. Man, too, is a spirit ; but his communications do not consist of spirit. The spirituality of the communications does not follow as a consequence from the spirituality of the agent that makes them. Communications are only one class of phenomena resulting from the divine operations ; and if these consist of spirit, so must all such phenomena.

Besides, it is according to the analogy of the divine operations, and according to the attributes of the divine character, that if God should undertake to hold intercourse with men through the medium of language, he would use language as men use it, and express himself intelligibly. No communication is intelligible, which is not contained.

in language understood by man. God has made his communications in languages which were generally understood at the time and in the countries in which they were made, and which we still have the means of learning. If he departed in any measure from the common usage, in the application of words to designate objects or to express ideas, it would become necessary in order to be understood, to show how far and in what, that usage was departed from. No such explanation is found. God nowhere intimates that the meaning he attaches to words is different from the common one, neither does he anywhere intimate, that the theory of double senses is that according to which he requires his word to be explained.

5. ADDITIONAL ARGUMENTS AGAINST THE THEORY OF DOUBLE SENSES.

1. The later inspired writers often quote from the writings of those who preceded them; but never refer to those writings as having more than one true meaning. In Acts ii. 25, we find a quotation of this kind; as also in Acts xiii. 35—37. It is evident from an inspection of these passages, that the apostles considered the declaration which they quoted, as referring solely to Christ, and not to David at all. For they expressly assert that it cannot be applied to David, and that it did not receive its fulfilment in him.

2. The historical parts of the Bible are as simple narratives of events as any other history, and have no marks of allegorical and hidden meanings, that other historical writings do not have. Take for example the histories of David, Solomon, Ahab, &c. They appear to be as free from allegorical and hidden meanings, as the histories of Constantine, George the 4th, Calvin, Luther, or any other individuals, narratives of whose lives are recorded.

3. The same may be said of the preceptive parts of the Bible. They exhibit no marks of hidden and allegorical senses that other preceptive writings do not exhibit. The laws of God are stated with as much precision, and with as much apparent simplicity, as any intelligent father

would use in giving directions to his children. The command, "Thou shalt not kill," forbids our unlawfully taking the life of a fellow-man, and of course prohibits all those angry and revengeful feelings that lead to murder. There is no need of allegorical interpretation to give such ample extent to this command. It is already sufficiently extensive in its meaning. The same may be said of every other precept.

4. The origin and early history of the allegorical mode of interpretation are against it. Authentic history, instead of referring it to the schools of the prophets or to the communications of divinely inspired men, can trace it only to the mystic instructions of Jewish Rabbies, who made void the law of God by their puerile traditions, or to the schools of heathen philosophy, whose very light consisted in the thickest darkness of paganism. When God spake to Moses from the burning bush, and on various other occasions, his words must have been understood according to their usual meanings. Moses could not have supposed them to mean any thing more or less, than to designate those ideas which men generally attach to them. When God spoke to the children of Israel from Mount Sinai, he must have been understood in a similar manner by them. They had only one dictionary by which to learn the meaning of words, whether used in the communications of God to man, or of man to his God and to his fellow-man.

5. If God had intended that his words should be interpreted in allegorical senses, and that other meanings different and distinct from the natural one should be conveyed, we should suppose, of course, that he would have intimated that fact to the prophets, and have authorized them to have revealed it to the church at large; but we have no historical evidence that this was ever done, neither have any general or particular rules been given by inspiration, according to which the investigation of hidden senses is to be prosecuted.

6. Allegorical interpretation is injurious to the interests of religion, in leading persons to neglect and undervalue the natural sense of the sacred Scriptures. In these

writings, interpreted according to the common rules and principles of language, are treasured up the great doctrines and duties of the Christian religion—doctrines and duties by which sinners are converted to God, and saints prepared for heaven. If the study of these doctrines, and the practice of these duties, are not constantly urged, religion can hardly fail to decline. A system of interpretation, therefore, which leads men to overlook and undervalue them, must be of highly pernicious tendency ; and this is certainly in many instances the fact, with those who adopt the allegorical system of interpretation. They puzzle themselves with prying into supposed allegories, when they ought to be studying faith, repentance, and prayer.

7. Again, in multitudes of cases, the pretended internal senses are the plain and obvious meanings of the passages to which they are attributed, or nothing more than obvious inferences from those meanings, so that there is no need of other rules of interpretation than the common ones to elicit them.

We ought carefully to distinguish between the proper meaning of a passage, and the inferences which may be even correctly drawn from it. For example, the command, thou shalt not kill, means thou shalt not unlawfully take human life. Inferences, however, which may be drawn from it, are exceedingly numerous and various. If we are prohibited from inflicting death on the body, surely it must be wrong for us voluntarily to be the cause of the eternal death of the soul ; but to prohibit inflicting spiritual injury, so to speak, was no part of the design of God in the command under consideration. But though it was no part of his design to make that prohibition in this passage, yet he has made, and repeated it in many others, and the principle on which it is founded is the same as that which serves as the foundation of the prohibition referred to in the command, “ Thou shalt not kill,”—that is, thou shalt not inflict temporal death. The principle of this and of every other prohibition, and of every other command relating to social duties, is “ Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself ;” and in

applying it we are to remember that love is kind, and that it worketh no ill to our neighbour.

8. Finally, according to the common rules of interpretation, the Bible inculcates every moral virtue, and interdicts every species of sin, at the same time that it presents the strongest motives to obedience, and holds out the strongest dissuasives from disobedience. The theory of double senses, therefore, cannot increase the perfection of the Bible as a rule of life, it being already perfect and complete.

From all which the conclusion is obvious and irresistible—that the theory of double senses, or, in other words, the system of mystical and allegorical interpretation, is wrong and injurious.

SECTION V.

INTERPRETATION OF THE PROPHECIES.*

The prophetical writings of the sacred Scriptures are almost entirely useless to a large portion of professed Christians, from the imperfect understanding they have of them. Prophecy corresponds to history. It is a narrative or description of events written before the events take place. Both prophecy and history are expected to give a correct and true delineation of the events to which they refer, and of no others. In many cases the language of prophecy is as full and explicit as it is possible for that of history to be. In many cases prophecies are obscure, especially where they have not been fulfilled; and their obscurity arises principally from the difficulty of determining their chronology, and also of distinguishing plain from figurative language.

The difficulty of determining the chronology of events referred to in the prophetical writings, occasions the same obscurity in the prophecies, which a similar indefi-

* See BIBLICAL CABINET, Vol. I. p. 213, section on the Interpretation of Prophecy, by Rev. C. H. Terrot.

miteness of chronological notices would occasion in history if it were admitted there.

The difficulty of distinguishing plain from figurative language is greater in prophetical than in historical writings, on account of our not being able to compare the description with the event, as we uniformly do when the event has taken place. This difficulty vanishes when the prediction is fulfilled, and is known to be so.

1. The first step to be taken in the interpretation of a prophecy, is to determine, if possible, the time when it was delivered, and the circumstances of the prophet and people at that time. In some cases the time is expressly declared, as Isa. vi. 1. "In the year that King Uzziah died, I saw," &c. So also vii. 1. of the same book, which was at least seventeen years later than that of the preceding chapter, being in the time of Ahaz; and the reign of Jotham, which continued sixteen years, having intervened.

Sometimes when the date of a prophecy is not expressly given, it may be inferred from some expression or expressions descriptive of the existing state of things. This is the case with the prophecy contained in the first chapter of Isaiah. In the sixth and seventh verses of this chapter, the land of Judah is described as being desolated by enemies, and the condition of the people as being one of extreme depression. By turning to the books of Kings and Chronicles, we find that the description above referred to, cannot have indicated the state of things in the prosperous reign of Uzziah, or in that of Jotham; but that it accords well with the actual state of the country in the reign of Ahaz. Hence we infer that the prophecy contained in this chapter was delivered in the reign of that idolatrous and unfortunate monarch, and seventeen years later than the prophecy contained in the sixth chapter of the same book.

In determining the times of the delivery of different prophecies or prophetical discourses, it is to be borne in mind that the different prophetical books of the Old Testament are not arranged in their proper chronological order.

Jonah prophesied much earlier than Isaiah, notwithstanding his book is placed after that of Isaiah in the sacred volume.

The principle on which the present arrangement was made, was to place the prophetic books in the order of their comparative lengths, without any regard to the times of their composition and delivery. A similar arrangement was adopted in regard to the epistles of the New Testament. The longer epistles are placed before the shorter in the order of their comparative lengths, with the exception that the epistle to the Hebrews, and the Revelation of St. John, for particular reasons, stand out of their proper order.

In addition to the fact that the arrangement of the prophetical books is not a chronological one, it is worthy of particular remark, that the different parts of the same book do not always stand in their proper chronological order. An instance of this has already been given from Isaiah,—others might easily be adduced from the longer books of the prophets. This irregularity arose probably from the different prophetical discourses having been published separately ; and when they came to be collected after the deaths of those prophets, they were put together without any very thorough investigation of the order in which they were written and published.

2. Having ascertained, as nearly as we can, the time when a prophetical discourse or poem was delivered, we are prepared to proceed intelligently to the investigation of that discourse. Here we are to consider that every discourse has a beginning, middle, and end ; and that these are in many cases very different from what the division into chapters would indicate. We are not to take it for granted that a discourse ends with a chapter. Discourses are sometimes continued through several chapters successively, and every part ought to be studied in connection with every other part.

3. The principal subject treated of in every prophetical discourse ought to be carefully ascertained, and descriptive terms interpreted so as to correspond with the subject. If there is an incongruity between any of those

terms and the subject to which they relate, when understood literally, they ought to be interpreted figuratively, as in historical writings, and indeed in all other kinds of composition. Some figurative modes of expression acquire a fixed and certain meaning from established usage, as using the term days to designate years, &c. The abundant use made of figures of speech in the prophetical writings, renders the interpretation of them exceedingly difficult. This peculiarity arises, in part perhaps, from those writings having been composed in poetry, which is characteristically figurative.

4. Events which are represented as continuous ought to be carefully distinguished. Events are often grouped together in prophecy as well as in other kinds of writing, in consequence of having some general relation to each other, which, in point of time, are widely separated. We are not to infer, because events are described or referred to in immediate succession, that their occurrence will be in immediate succession too. The fact is sometimes quite the reverse of this. Take, for example, the Redeemer's kingdom. The feeble beginnings of it are mentioned in connection with its glorious establishment and universal prevalence, and yet they are separated by centuries of time.

Inattention to this point has occasioned floods of error in the interpretation of prophetical language, both in ancient and modern times.

The 24th chapter of Matthew has been enveloped in needless obscurity by a neglect of this rule. The subjects treated of in that chapter are mentioned in the 2d and 3d verses—the destruction of Jerusalem, the future coming or second advent of Christ, and the end of the world—events perfectly distinct, though treated of continuously.

To the 29th verse, the discourse of our Saviour relates evidently to the destruction of Jerusalem. From the 29th to the 31st inclusive, it treats of the second advent of Christ, and of preceding and attending events. The 33d, 34th, and 35th verses, refer evidently to the former, under the appellation *these things*. The 36th, and the

following, refer to the latter, under the appellation *that day*—an appellation applied to the second advent of Christ in other parts of the sacred volume. See 2 Tim. iv. 7, 8, “Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord the righteous judge shall give me at that day,”—that is, the day of the second advent and judgment.

5. Those representations of the future are to be considered figurative, in which there is a distinct reference to earlier occurrences in Jewish or general history. The future is often described in prophecy by figurative descriptions borrowed from events that are past. An example of this may be found in Isa. xi. 15, 16, where it is said, that in effecting a new deliverance for his people, “the Lord will utterly destroy the tongue of the Egyptian sea, and with his mighty wind shall he shake his hand over the river, and shall smite it in the seven streams, and make men go over dry-shod, and there shall be a highway for the remnant of his people, which shall be left from Assyria, like as it was to Israel in the day that he came up out of the land of Egypt.” This destroying of the Red sea, and making a passage across the seven streams of the Nile, contain an evident allusion to events which characterized the Exodus from Egypt, and forcibly and clearly teach that God was to effect a wonderful deliverance for his covenant people, but not that he was literally to dry up the sea, or open a passage through the river. So also in Isa. iv. 5. “And the Lord will create upon every dwelling-place of Mount Zion, and upon her assemblies, a cloud and smoke by day, and the shining of a flame of fire by night, for upon all the glory shall be a defence.” This passage contains an allusion to the cloudy and fiery pillar which God exhibited to the Israelites at the time of the Exodus from Egypt, and which was rendered both the guide and protection of that people during their perilous journey. The meaning of it is, that at the time referred to, God will grant special protection to his children, as much as if every assembly for his worship, and every dwelling of his worshippers were surrounded with the cloud of the

Divine presence in the day time, and with the fire by night.

Zechariah x. 11, and Hosea ii. 14, 15, afford examples of a similar nature.

6. Those representations of the future are to be considered figurative, in which there is a distinct reference to the Levitical rites and ceremonies. This rule is similar to the preceding, and is founded on the same principle, a principle which prompts us intuitively to represent and describe things unknown by imagery, drawn from such as are known. The modes of Christian worship were to the pious in the days of the Old Testament prophets, things unknown, though the principles of it are the same as they ever have been. It is not strange, therefore, that the prophets should array the religion of future times in the pious garb with which the saints of that age were familiar.

An example of this may be found in Jer. xxxiii. 17, 18, "For thus saith the Lord, David shall never want a man to sit upon the throne of the house of Israel; neither shall the priests, the Levites, want a man before me to offer burnt offerings, and to kindle meat offerings, and to do sacrifice continually."

This passage relates evidently to the times of the Messiah. To make it assert the perpetuity of the Levitical rites and ceremonies, would be an utter perversion of its true meaning, inasmuch, as according to that construction, the assertion it contains is entirely false in fact, and opposed to the doctrine of a different and new dispensation to commence under the auspices of the Messiah, which the prophets had clearly predicted.

Instead, therefore, of considering it as asserting the perpetuity of the Levitical rites, we ought to view it as declaring the continued and universal prevalence of the true worship of God, and that in language, and by the aid of imagery, best adapted to the imperfect knowledge of those times.

7. Those representations of the future in which there is a distinct reference to persons who had lived previous to the time of the prophecy, are to be considered as figurative.

Of this kind, is that prediction contained in Mat. iv. 5, "Behold I will send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the Lord, and he shall turn the heart," &c.

Not that Elijah should come in person, but that one should come of his fervent, ardent and faithful spirit, to perform the office referred to.

8. Figurative and literal expressions are often blended in prophecy, so as to require much care and attention in discriminating between them. In such cases, the literal, when ascertained, must be allowed to explain and modify the figurative; and one part of a prophecy must be interpreted in consistency with other parts of the same. Because some part of a prophetic description is figurative, we are not to infer that the whole is; neither because some part of it is to be understood literally, are we to infer that the whole is to be so understood, any more than we should make the same inference in regard to history or any other kind of poetry than the prophetic.

9. The prophecies are to be considered as constituting one connected chain of events, and are to be interpreted so as to harmonize with each other. All such interpretations of them as set them at variance with one another are manifestly wrong, and derogatory to the sacred Scriptures. Every part of the prophetic writings has some relation to other parts of the same, just as every part of a well written history has some relation to other parts of the same. In order to understand one part of the prophecies well, we must study the whole. For example, in order to understand well one part of Isaiah, we must study the whole of that distinguished prophet; and in order to understand well that prophet, we must study the rest of the prophets, both Old Testament and New,—so intimately are the prophetical writings connected, and so happily and forcibly do they illustrate each other.

10. No prophecy is to be interpreted as having more than one true meaning, however comprehensive it may be, and to whatever length of time it may relate. The obscurity of this part of the sacred Scriptures, and the sudden transitions they contain, from one subject and

from one event to another, have led biblical scholars to apply to them the theory of allegorical senses, more frequently and confidently than to other parts of the sacred Scriptures. It has been very convenient to suppose that many prophecies have received one fulfilment in events that transpired at one time, and that they waited till a more remote period for another full accomplishment. This system of interpretation has the recommendation of convenience, in helping us to get comfortably around difficulties, which, on the other plan, we must look full in the face and boldly encounter.

But it is unsatisfactory and unphilosophical. Besides, the principle is just as inappropriate to prophecy as it is to history. The idea of describing two events at one dash, whether past or to come, appears absurd. It is what man never attempted to do in works of moral, religious, or scientific instruction. God has never commanded us to compass the impossibility of making out primary and secondary senses to the simple and ample disclosures of his word. No sober scholar thinks of giving a double sense to history,—why then obtrude it upon prophecy? Why consider God in this part, and in this part only of his word, as departing from the universal rules of human composition and language? But if we drive the theory of double senses from one part of the sacred volume, we may, by the same weapons and by the same system of warfare, drive it from every part of that blessed book, around which it has thrown such a mist of absurdity.

11. The prophetical writings ought to be studied in connection with the historical parts of Scripture. In the first place, we ought to make ourselves familiarly acquainted with the state of things when the prophetical discourse we are studying was delivered. This will elucidate many passages, which to one destitute of that knowledge would be necessarily obscure.

In the second place, we ought to make ourselves familiar with the history of events to which the prophecy we are investigating relates. Prediction derives illustration from the history of the event to which it relates, just as

a description in geography is rendered more clear by a map representing to the eye the places described. The history of events which were the fulfilment of prophecy is contained partly in the sacred volume, and is to be sought for partly in the records of profane history. A large number of the prophecies have the history of their fulfilment in the later portions of the sacred Scriptures. This is the case with many of the predictions which relate to the fortunes of the Jewish nation—the Messiah, and the first establishment of his kingdom in the Christian dispensation, &c.; also several predictions relating to the fortunes of ancient heathen nations.

12. Those interpretations of prophecy, in which the events supposed to be pointed out do not correspond to the prediction, must be false. This rule shews the fallacy and incorrectness of those interpretations of the 24th and 25th of Matthew, which refer all the predictions contained in them to the destruction of the city of Jerusalem by the Romans, and to contemporaneous and preceding events.

The prophetic account of the advent of Christ, given in those chapters, and of the general judgment in which all nations are to be concerned, and their destinies of weal or wo decided upon, has nothing in the history of the destruction of Jerusalem, and contemporaneous events, which answers to it. There was no visible advent of Christ at the destruction of Jerusalem,—there was no general judgment at that time more than at other times,—there was no receiving of the righteous into glory, and banishment of the wicked into hell, at that time more than at other times. For these reasons, therefore, as well as others, we may conclude that all the predictions contained in these chapters did not receive their fulfilment at the time referred to.

The accomplishment of prophecy may be gradual,—it may extend through a series of years, and embrace, like history, many subordinate events, but it must have one true proper fulfilment.

A person who understands the rules of interpretation for prophetic language, and who endeavours to follow

them, may, in some cases, be mistaken; but one who does not understand and observe them, will be almost sure to err in numberless instances. And it will be found equally true in this, and in every other department of sacred learning, that the hand of the diligent maketh rich in knowledge as well as wealth. Search therefore diligently, intelligently, prayerfully, the **SCRIPTURES**, "for in them ye think ye have eternal life;" and the Gospel which they communicate, "is the power of God to salvation."

SECTION VI.

ON THE INTERPRETATION OF THE BIBLE, CONSIDERED AS CONTAINING A SYSTEM OF PURE MORALITY AND RELIGION.

1. Moral and religious truths are not like objects of sense, that force themselves upon the attention of every beholder. They cannot be understood without reflection and study. Men must think in order to apprehend them aright. The subject of morals is in its nature a complicated, and in some of its facts and relations, a difficult subject. It is open to the studious, candid, persevering inquirer; but its truths do not effectually catch the eye and captivate the heart of the superficial, impatient, and uncandid dogmatist.

In this respect the Bible is like other books which relate to difficult subjects. Works on natural philosophy, mathematics, and other branches of science, though prepared with ever so much ability, and ever so well adapted to the human mind, cannot be understood without patient persevering study.

2. As far as the subjects treated of in the Bible come within the sphere of human observation, examine those subjects particularly; and compare them with the descriptions of them and references to them, contained in the Bible. This rule is one of fundamental importance.

When you read of man, as described in the Bible, look at him as living and acting in the world. Let the theoretical views of the Bible in relation to subjects of this kind, be illustrated by living examples of that to which they refer. The examples will illustrate and explain the theory better than it can possibly be explained in any other way.

3. In all matters of duty, practise as well as theorize. Even in the sciences, the path of experiment is the most direct, and in some cases, the only way to knowledge. This is emphatically the case in regard to the most spiritual parts of the Christian system. They cannot be correctly understood and appreciated by the cold calculating theorist, while he continues such. Colours must be viewed with the natural eye in order that we may understand them correctly, and be able to distinguish one from another. Mere description can never give us adequate ideas in relation to colours, except in connection with our own experimental knowledge. So in regard to holiness. We must understand it experimentally in order to understand it thoroughly. The necessity of practice, or in other words, of obedience, is expressly declared by our Saviour in John vii. 17, where he says, that if any man does the will of God, he shall know of his doctrine, whether it be divine. This passage implies evidently, that without practising obedience, the knowledge referred to will not be attained.

A man must practise morality in order to understand and appreciate the pure Gospel system, as it relates to this subject : He must in like manner practise the duties of religion if he would rightly understand and appreciate them, as taught in the Bible. Much of the error of the religious world, arises from a disposition to theorize without experiment. Theorists have not benefited and adorned the walks of physical science, except so far as their theories have gone hand in hand with experiment ; and I apprehend that the same principle will hold true, in relation to the higher departments of moral and theological science.

Immorality blunts the moral sense, and in that way

incapacitates men, in a measure, for the successful investigation of moral subjects. This is exemplified in the case of the drunkard, the sensualist, the thief, the liar, and every other class of immoral men, that can be named. There is no exception. It is no wonder, therefore, that such persons, while they continue such, should be unable to interpret correctly those parts of the Scriptures which relate to a pure morality. It is their vice which obscures their intellectual and moral vision, that they cannot see. It is their vice which casts in dread eclipse the glorious sun of righteousness, so far as they are concerned, and shrouds them in fatal darkness. Every act of immorality contributes to harden the heart, to darken the mind, to stupify the conscience. Every act of impiety has the same effect. The hardening and blinding influence of impiety, is more concealed, than that of immorality ; but it is not more certain.

The moralist that lives an irreligious life, as every unconverted man does, is found to be as hardened and blinded in his irreligion as the sensualist, or gambler, or liar, is in his immorality.

When a man's objections to divine truth whether relating to morality or religion strictly so called, arise from immorality, or irreligion of heart and life, the soundest and most conclusive reasonings, if not directed against these real and proper causes of the error, are expended in vain.

4. Lastly, reduce your knowledge to system as fast as you acquire it. This can be done to a greater or less extent by every intelligent person, that is, by every one that has common intelligence. I would not flatter every Christian with the hope of becoming a profound divine. That attainment is perhaps within the reach of but few. But I would hold out to every one the hope of becoming a sound, intelligent Christian. Systematic knowledge is the most perfect knowledge. This holds true in relation to all subjects, secular and religious. Those views of science which are not systematic, have never been considered as constituting adequate knowledge. When persons undertake to teach the sciences, they do it in a systematic

manner. They cannot do it to advantage in any other manner. So when persons study the sciences, they generally study them systematically, beginning with the elementary principles, and ascending gradually and progressively to those parts which are abstruse and complicated. By proceeding in this manner every part of science is easy ; but reverse the process, and not a single science would be attainable by ordinary capacities. The whole round of learning, which is now simple, and easily attained, if studied as many undertake to study the Bible, beginning with the darkest and most complicated portions of it, would be utterly unintelligible ; and universal scepticism, or in other words, universal ignorance would unavoidably ensue. Begin, then, with the elementary principles of religion ; learn them, and ascend gradually as you are able, to its higher and more difficult doctrines. In this way, the light of that which is simple, may be made to dispel the darkness, and remove the difficulties, in which more obscure portions of the word of God are involved.

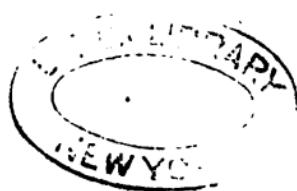
Catechisms and well written systems of divinity may be of very essential service in the systematic study of the sacred Scriptures. It is on this ground that the use of such works by students in theology has been so generally approved by the pious and intelligent of different denominations. All intelligent Christians may use these to advantage, not as ultimate sources of information, but as helps to the systematic study of the Bible.

INQUIRY
INTO THE
STATE OF SLAVERY
IN THE
EARLY AND MIDDLE AGES
OF THE
CHRISTIAN ERA.

BY
B. B. EDWARDS, ESQ.

EDINBURGH:
THOMAS CLARK, 38, GEORGE STREET.

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James Burnet, Printer, 23, East Thistle Street.

INQUIRY
INTO THE
STATE OF SLAVERY, &c.*

VARIOUS definitions are given by the Roman and other writers of the word *servus*. Scaliger derives it from *servando*, because the slave preserves or guards the property of his master. Slaves are denominated *servi*, says the code of Justinian, from the verb *servare*, to preserve; for it is the practice of our generals to sell their captives, being accustomed to preserve and not to destroy them. Slaves are also called *Mancipia, a manu capere*, in that they are taken by the hand of the enemy. Just. Lib. i. Tit. 3. The origin of the word *servus*, says Augustin, de Civit. Lib. xix. ch. 15, is understood to be derived from the fact that prisoners, who, by the laws of war, might have been put to death, were preserved by the victors, and made slaves. *Servus est nomen*, says Seneca, Ep. 32, ex *inuria natum*.† *Servi, servitia, and mancipia*, are frequently used as convertible terms. The term for a slave born and bred in the family was *verna*.

In respect to the comparative number of the slaves and the free citizens of Rome, we have not sufficient data on which to found a correct judgment. We may agree with

* Those who wish to see this interesting subject treated at large, and from the earliest period, are referred to Mr. Blair's Inquiry into the State of Slavery among the Romans, published at Edinburgh in 1833. The Quarterly Review, speaking of Mr. Blair's work, says, " This valuable little Treatise belongs to a class of no common occurrence in our recent literature;—it is an extremely sensible and scholar-like inquiry into a subject of great interest in *classical antiquity*, or rather in the general history of mankind."

† Aristotle's definition of a slave was applicable to Italy, Polit. I. 6. *πτῆμα καὶ δργασσον τοῦ δισπέτευ θιμψυχος*.

Niebuhr in doubting the accuracy of the older *censuses*, which were taken at Rome. The Romans, in the early periods of their history, rarely or ever acted as menial servants in the city. Niebuhr thinks that mechanical occupations were not lawful for plebeians. Yet in the country they willingly performed agricultural labour. Lipsius admits the probability of there being as many slaves as freemen, or rather more, within Rome, in its most populous times. After the influx of wealth, which followed the foreign conquests, the number of slaves must have been greatly enlarged. Polybius, Hist. ch. ii. estimates the forces which the Romans and their allies could bring into the field, between the first and second Punic wars, at 770,000 men. This enumeration, however, implying a total free class of 3,080,000, and an equal amount of slave population, is much larger than seems consistent with the state of Italy at that time. The number of citizens returned to Augustus at the 72d lustrum, A. U. C. 745, as appears from the monument of Ancyra, was 4,163,000. At the 73d lustrum, the number was over 4,000,000. In the 74th lustrum, in the reign of Claudius, A. D. 48, the citizens amounted to 6,944,000, of whom, probably, but a small proportion consisted of persons out of Italy. If we allow two slaves to each Roman, an average below that of some Grecian cities, we should not in that case take into the account those slaves who were the property of the various orders of freemen, or those who belonged to other slaves. Rich citizens were very extensive owners of slaves, kept both for luxury and profit, as domestics or artizans in town, and as labourers on the vast estates in the provinces.* Some rich individuals are said to have possessed 10,000, and even 20,000, of their fellow-creatures. Seneca says, De Tran. Animi. ch. viii. that Demetrius, the freedman of Pompey, was richer than his master. "Numerus illi

* Pignorius has enumerated 48 classes of *rustic slaves*, 40 of *rustic or urban*, 60 of *urban*, 66 of *personal attendants*, 15 of *upper servants*, 13 of *nursery slaves*, 180 of *slaves of luxury*, and 5 of *military slaves*—in all three hundred and twenty-five classes.

The reader will find a complete list of these various classes of slaves given in detail in "BLAIR's Inquiry," cited above.

quotidie servorum, velut imperatori exercitus referebatur." The slaves of Crassus formed a large part of his fortune. His architects and masons alone exceeded 500. Scaurus possessed above 4000 domestic, and as many rural slaves. In the reign of Augustus, a freedman, who had sustained great losses during the civil wars, left 4116 slaves, besides other property. On one occasion, the family of Pedanius Secundus, prefect of Rome under Nero, was found to consist of 400 slaves. Tac. Ann. 14. 43, "quem numerus servorum tuebitur, cum quadringeniti," &c. When the wife of Apuleius gave up the lesser part of her estate to her son, 400 slaves formed one of the items surrendered. Slaves always composed a great part of the moveable property of individuals, and formed a chief article of ladies' dowries. A law passed by Augustus against the excessive manumission of slaves by testament, forbidding any one to bequeath liberty to more than one-fifth of all his slaves, contains the following words: "Phures autem quam centum ex majori numero servorum manumitti non licet."* We may hence infer that 500 was not an extraordinary number of slaves to be held by one owner. It was fashionable to go abroad attended by a large number of slaves. Horace, L. i. Sat. 3. v. 11, says, "Habebat s^epe ducentos, s^epe decem servos." Augustus prohibited exiles from carrying with them more than 20 slaves.† Besides the domestic and agricultural slaves were the gladiators, who were chiefly slaves, and who were extremely numerous at different periods. We may have some idea of the frequency and ferociousness with which these were exhibited from a restriction imposed by Augustus, who forbade magistrates to give shows of gladiators above twice in one year, or of more than 60 pairs at one time. Julius C^æsar exhibited at once 320 pairs. Trajan exhibited them for 123 days, in the course of which 10,000 gladiators fought. The State and corporate bodies possessed considerable numbers. For example, 600 were employed in guarding against fires in Rome.‡ Chrysostom says,

* Hugo, *Jus Civile Antejustinianum*, Vol. I. p. 157.

† See Plin. *Nat. Hist.* 33. 47, 52; also 34. 6, and 35. 58.

‡ *Publicos servos*.—*Livy* 9. 29.

that under Theodosius the Great and Arcadius, some persons had 2000 or 3000 slaves. Synesius complains that every family of tolerable means kept Scythian slaves of luxury; and Ammianus Marcellinus informs us that luxurious ladies and great men used to have 400 or 500 servile attendants. From the time of Augustus to Justinian, we may allow three slaves to one freeman;—we shall thus have a free population in Italy of 6,944,000, and of slaves 20,832,000—total, 27,776,000. “After weighing every circumstance which could influence the balance,” says Gibbon, “it seems probable that there existed in the time of Claudius about twice as many provincials as there were citizens, of either sex and of every age; and that the slaves were at least equal in number to the free inhabitants of the Roman world. The total amount of this imperfect calculation would rise to about 120,000,000 of persons.”*

The different methods in which men became slaves were by war, commerce, the operation of law in certain cases, and by their birth.

1. *Slaves, acquired by war.*—In general, prisoners of war were sold immediately, or as soon as possible, after their capture. If a subsequent treaty provided for their release, it would appear that a special law was passed, ordering the buyers of such slaves to give them up, on receiving from the treasury repayment of the original purchase money. Livy, 42. 8, says, in relation to the Ligurians, 10,000 of whom had surrendered themselves as prisoners, “At ille [consul] arma omnibus ademit oppidum diruit, ipsos bonaque eorum vendidit.” As the senate were at the time deliberating about the treatment of them, “res visa atrox;” a decree was issued, annulling the previous sales, and compelling the respective purchasers to set the Ligurians free, but with restitution by the public of the prices which had been paid. Prisoners belonging to a revolted nation were, without exception in favour of voluntary surrender, sold into ser-

* The present population of Italy is between 16 and 17,000,000. See the *Essay of Hume on the Populousness of Ancient Nations*,—Gibbon, *Hist. Dec. and Fall*, ch. ii.—Blair's *Inquiry into the State of Roman Slavery*, ch. i.

vitute ; and sometimes, as a more severe punishment or greater precaution, it was stipulated at their sale, that they should be carried to distant places, and should not be manumitted within twenty or thirty years.* After the fall of the Samnites at Aquilonia, 2,033,000 pieces of brass were realized by the sale of prisoners, who amounted to about 36,000.† Lueretius brought from the Volscian war 1250 captives ; and by the capture of one inconsiderable town, no less than 4000 slaves were obtained. On the descent of the Romans upon Africa, in the first Punic war, 20,000 prisoners were taken. Gelon, praetor of Syracuse, having routed a Carthaginian army, took such a number of captives, that he gave 500 of them to each of the several citizens of Agrigentum. On the great victory of Marius and Catulus over the Cimbri, 60,000 were captured. When Pindenissus was taken by Cicero, the inhabitants were sold for more than £100,000. Augustus having overcome the Salassi, sold as slaves 36,000, of whom 8000 were capable of bearing arms. Cæsar in his Gallic wars, according to the moderate estimate of Velleius Paterculus, took more than 400,000 prisoners. The rule which forbade prisoners taken in civil wars to be dealt with as slaves, was sometimes disregarded. On the taking of Cremona by the forces of Vitellius, his general, Antonius, ordered that none of the captives should be detained : and the soldiers could find no purchasers for them.‡ A slave carried off from the Roman territories by the enemy, fell again under his master's authority, if he came back or was retaken. Roman citizens, who had been made prisoners, recovered their former rank, with all the rights and privileges belonging to it, upon their escape or recapture from the enemy's hands.

* *Ne in vicina regione servirent, neve intra tricesimum annum liberarentur.*—*Sueton. Octav. 21.*

† *Id aes redactum ex captivis dicebatur.*—*Livy, 10. 46.*

‡ The language of *Tacit. Lib. Hist. 3. 41.* is—*In ritamque prædam militibus efficerat consensus Italæ, emptionem talium mancipiorum adspersantis. Occidi coepere, quod ubi enotuit, a propinquis ad finibusque occulæ redemptebantur.*

2. *Slaves acquired by commerce.*—The slave-trade in Africa is as old as history reaches back. Among the ruling nations of the North coast—the Egyptians, Cyrenians, and Carthaginians, slavery was not only established, but they imported whole armies of slaves, partly for home use, and partly, at least by the Carthaginians, to be shipped for foreign markets. They were chiefly drawn from the interior, where kidnapping was just as much carried on then as it is now. Black male and female slaves were even an article of luxury, not only among the above-mentioned nations, but in Greece and Italy. The Troglodyte Ethiopians seem to have been a wild negro race, dwelling in caves in the neighbouring mountains, who were kidnapped by the Garamantes to be sold for slaves.* The slave-trade in Africa was directed mainly to females, who, in the Bælearian Islands, were sold for three times as much as the men.† For the building of public works at Rome, vast numbers of slaves were procured. The piers, porticoes, aqueducts, and roads, whose magnificent ruins are now an object of admiration, were constructed by the sweat and blood of slaves. In raising such a structure as the mausoleum of Adrian, thousands of wretched men, torn from their own firesides, toiled unto death. The island Delos became an extensive mart for slaves. In that opulent emporium, 10,000 could be bought and sold in a single day. Predatory excursions were made into Cilicia, Pamphylia, and Syria, and great numbers were carried off to the market places of Sidon or Delos. For a long period great numbers of slaves (*maximus mancipiorum fuit proventus*) were drawn from the interior of Asia Minor, particularly from Phrygia

* Heeren's Hist. Researches, Vol. I. Oxford edit. pp. 181, 223, 239. *Cum obsidibus Carthaginiensium, ut principum liberis, magna vis servorum erat. Augebant eorum numerum, ut ab recenti Africa bello, et ab ipsis Setinis captiva aliquot nationis ejus ex præda empta mancipia.*—*Livy*, 32. 26.

†

Tibi pocula cursor
 Gætulus dabit aut nigri manus ossea Mauri
 Et cui per mediam nolis occurrere noctem,
 Clivosæ veheris dum per monumenta Latina.—*Juv.* 5. 51.

and Cappadocia. *Slave* and *Phrygian* became almost convertible terms. So great a multitude were carried into slavery that but few towns were planted,—the country was rather a pasturage for flocks. There were 6000 slaves which belonged to the temple of a goddess in Cappadocia. Hence the words of Horace—*Mancipiis locuples, eget æris Cappadocum rex.** At an early period, the emporia for slaves, from the extensive Scythian regions, were Panticapaeum, Dioscurias, and Phanagoria, all on the Euxine or Black Sea. Slaves appear to have reached the market of Rome, under the Cæsars, in separate bands, composed of natives of their several countries. The Getæ probably came from a country a little to the east of Pontus. The Davi were probably an oriental race. Alexandria was a considerable place for the sale of slaves of a particular kind. Slaves possessing certain accomplishments were procured from Cadiz.† Corsica, Sardinia, and Britain were the birth place of slaves. The profits of dealers, who bought slaves, that were captured in distant wars, were often enormous. In the camp of Lucullus in Pontus, a man might be purchased for three shillings, while the lowest price for which the same slave could be had, at Rome, was, perhaps, nearly £15.‡ In most countries, it was common for parents to sell their children into slavery. In trafficking with comparatively barbarous nations, dealers procured slaves by barter, at a very cheap rate. Salt, for example, was anciently much taken by the Thracians in exchange for human beings. Man-stealing was, at all times, a very prevalent crime among the ancients. Paul in denouncing man-stealers, 1 Tim. i. 10, as among the worst of sinners, impresses us with the belief, that the offence was very frequent. Even Romans were often carried off into illegal bondage, especially in troublous times, when individuals were permitted to keep private jails and work-

* See Heyne's *Opuscula Academica*, Vol. IV. p. 137, Goettingen, 1796.

† *Forsitan expectes, ut Gaditana canoro, etc. Juv. Sat. II. v. 162.*

‡ *Plutarch vit. Lucullus.*

houses, which served both for detention and concealment.* In calamitous times, the sale of children by their indigent parents was of frequent occurrence. Constantine allowed a new-born infant to be sold under the pressure of extreme want. This sale, in any need, was legalized by Theodosius the Great.

3. *Free-born Romans might be reduced to slavery by the operation of law.* Criminals doomed to certain ignominious punishments were, by effect of their sentence, deprived of citizenship, and sunk into a state of servitude. They were then termed *servi poenae*, and during the commonwealth, were the property of the public. A pardon or remission of the penalty, left the convict still a slave, unless he was restored to his former rank by a special act of grace. But this condition of penal slavery was entirely abolished by Justinian. Of old, those that did not give in their names for enrolment in the militia, were beaten, and sold into bondage beyond the Tiber. Those who did not make proper returns, to the censor, were liable to be visited with the same punishment. An indigent thief was adjudged as a slave to the injured party. By the Claudian decree, re-enacted under Vespasian, it was ordered that a free-born woman, having an intrigue with another person's slave, should herself be made the slave of her paramour's master. Various other laws of this sort were passed under the emperors. In early times, the exposure of children was common.† Both the Senecas relate that the custom of exposing feeble and deformed children was common.‡ Healthful infants were also sometimes left to perish. Not only prostitutes, but the wives of the most noble Romans, were frequently guilty of destroying their children before their

* Repurgandorum tota Italia ergastulorum, quorum domini in invidiam venerant etc.—*Suet. Vit. Tib.* 8.

† Portentosus foetus extinguimus, liberos quoque, si debiles monströsique editi sunt mergimus,—*Sen. de Ira. L. I. ch. 15.*

‡ Ex nepte Julia, post damnationem, editum infantem agnosci aliisque vetuit,—*Suet. Vit. Octav.* 65. After the death of Germanicus, as an indication of the intensest grief, partus conjugum expositi.—*Suet. Cal.* 5.

birth.* It came at length to be established as a rule, that those fathers or masters who exposed their own, or their slaves' offspring, should lose their respective rights, and that the children should become the slaves of any one who chose to take them up and support them. Justinian at last ordered that all exposed children should be free. Vagrant slaves, *mancipia vaga*, were dealt with as stray goods. Freedmen, if guilty of ingratitude towards their former masters, might be again reduced to slavery, though, according to Tacit. Ann. 13, 26, 27, the practice was discontinued in the reign of Adrian.

4. *Slavery by birth.* The following is the declaration of the civil law. "Slaves are either born such, or become so. They are born such when they are the slaves of bond-women; and they become slaves, either by the law of nations, that is by captivity; or by the civil law, which happens, when a free person, above the age of twenty, suffers himself to be sold, for the sake of sharing the price paid for him." Slavery by birth thus depended on the condition of the mother alone, and her master became owner of her offspring, born while she was his property. In order to determine the question of a child's freedom or servitude, the whole period of gestation was taken into view, by the Roman jurists; and if at any time, between conception and birth, the mother had been for one instant free, the law, by a humane fiction, supposed the birth to have taken place then, and held the infant to be free-born.† For fixing the ownership of a child, the date of the birth was alone regarded; and the father of a natural child, by his bond-woman, was the master of his offspring, as much as of any other of his slaves.

We will now proceed to an investigation of the condi-

* *Tantum artes hujus, tantum medicamana possunt, Quæ steriles facit atque homines in ventre necandos conductit.*—*Juv. Sat. 6. v. 595.* See also *Sen. Consol. ad Helviam. 16*, who speaks of the custom as not uncommon. *Suet. Vit. Dom. 22.* See the *Opus. Academ.* of *Tschirner. p. 72. Lip. 1829.*

† *Quia non debet calamitas matris ei nocere, qui in ventre est.* *Lib. i. Tit. 4. De Ingen.*

tion of the Roman slaves, first as it was in law, and secondly as it was in fact.

Slavery is defined in the *Codex Just.* as that by which one man is made subject to another, according to the law of nations, though *contra naturam*, contrary to natural right. “Manumission took its rise from the law of nations, for all men by the law of nature are born in freedom; nor was manumission heard of, while servitude was unknown.” “All slaves are in the power of their masters, which power is derived from the law of nations; for it is equally observable among all nations, that masters have had the power of life and death over their slaves; and that whatsoever is acquired by the slave, is acquired for the master.” “Servile relations are an impediment to matrimony, as when a father and daughter, or a brother and sister, are manumitted.” “The manumission does not change his state, because he had, before manumission, no state or civil condition.” (Caput.) “Whatever our slaves have at any time acquired, whether by delivery, stipulation, donation, bequest, or any other means, the same is reputed to be acquired by ourselves, for he who is a slave can have no property. And if a slave is instituted an heir, he cannot otherwise take upon himself the inheritance, than at the command of his master. Masters acquire by their slaves not only the property of things, but also the possession.” “Those persons are allowed to be good witnesses, who are themselves legally capable of taking by testament; but yet no woman, slave, interdicted prodigal, no person under puberty, &c. can be admitted a witness to a testament.” “An injury is never understood to be done to the slave; but it is reputed to be done to the master, through the person of his slave. If a man should only give ill language to a slave, or strike him with his fist, the master can bring no action on that account; if a stranger should beat the slave of another in a cruel manner, it is actionable.” “Inter servos et liberos matrimonium contrahi non potest; contubernium potest.” “A fugitive slave, who is retaken, cannot be manumitted in ten years contrary to the will of his former master.” Under the

alarm of great public danger, and during civil wars, slaves were occasionally taken into the ranks of the army, but they were not enlisted before being emancipated.*

The system of Roman polytheism was, at all times, exceedingly tolerant. During the empire, the introduction of foreign divinities and rites became fashionable. The servile classes followed any religion which they pleased. Rustic masters and their slaves sometimes united in offering up sacrifices to the gods. Slaves were permitted to make offerings to Venus. They were not specially excluded in later times from the great religious solemnities, except the Magalensian plays in honour of Cybele. Public slaves were employed about temples. Female slaves were suffered to participate in some of the mysteries of the Bona Dea. Hercules was the tutelar divinity of slaves, and Juno Feronia presided over their manumission. Public holidays, in all amounting to about thirty in a year, during the existence of paganism, were observed by slaves as well as freemen, with partial cessation from labour. The customary rights of burial were not denied to slaves. Monuments were often erected to their memory, as is proved uncontestedly by the numerous inscriptions, preserved in Gruter and elsewhere. Slaves were, at all times, permitted to avail themselves of the temporary protection of sanctuaries. These were the temples and altars of the gods, afterwards the palace and images of the emperors, and still later Christian churches and shrines. It was lawful for any person to be the proprietor of slaves; even a slave might hold others of his own class, and act as their master to all intents; but still, those slaves were, as fully as the rest of his *peculium*, subject to the superior rights of his free lord.

The customary allowance of food for each slave was,

* Octo millia juvenum validiorum ex servitiis, prius sciscitantes singulos, vellentne militare, empta publice armaverunt. *Liv. 22.*
57. Ex hoc edicto dati naute, armati instructiue ab dominis, etc. *Liv. 24, 11, 17.* Servi quibus arma darentur, ita ut pretium pro iis bello perfecto dominis solveretur.—*Liv. 24. 6.*

probably, four Roman bushels (modius, one peck English) of manufactured corn a month—monthly supplies being furnished to the upper slaves in the country, and daily rations to those in the city. Gladiators were proverbially well fed, (paratos cibos, ut gladiatoriam saginam, etc. Tac. Hist. 2. 88.) Salt and oil were commonly allowed, and occasionally vinegar, and salt fish, olives, &c. They had daily what was about an English pint and a half of wine. *Posca*, a mixture of vinegar and water, was given to slaves as well as to soldiers. Slaves near town procured for themselves other necessaries and even luxuries.

Male slaves were not permitted by law to wear the *toga*, gown—*bulla*, ball—or the gold ring, which were the badges of citizenship; nor were female slaves suffered to assume the *stola*, the robe of free and modest matrons. The cap, *pileus*, as an emblem of liberty, was probably a forbidden piece of dress. (Servi ad pileum vocati. Liv. 34. 32.) In most other respects they were attired as their masters pleased, till the reign of Alexander Severus, who appointed a certain garb for the servile classes. It had been proposed at a much earlier period to clothe slaves in a peculiar manner, but the project was abandoned from dread of shewing to the slaves the *superiority of their numbers.**

The labourers on a farm were shut up at night in a building called a work-house, *ergastulum*, but which rather resembled a prison. Each slave had a separate cell.† Some masters allowed well-disposed slaves to be better lodged than others.‡ Suetonius informs us that it had become so common to expose sick slaves on the isle of Esculapius in the Tiber, that Claudius enacted a law to

* Quantum periculum immineret, si servi nostri numerare nos cœpissent.—*Sen. de Clem.* 1. 24. Galliae purpurae tingendæ causa ad servitiorum vestes.—*Plin. Nat. Hist.* 16. 31.

† Numerus illi quotidie servorum, velut imperatori exercitus, referebatur, cui jamdudum divitiae esse debuerant duo vicarii et cella laxior.—*Sen. de Tranquil. An.* 8. 2.

‡ Reliquia pars lateris hujus servorum libertorumque usibus detinetur, plerisque tam mundis, ut accipere hospites possint.—*Plin. Ep.* 2. 17.

prevent the barbarity.* No authoritative regulations seem ever to have been adopted for limiting the forced labour of slaves within due bounds. Agricultural labourers were probably made to undergo great fatigues. Considerable abatement of toil was made in favour of female slaves, particularly such as had borne three or more children.

Masters were often at great pains to teach their slaves various exercises, trades, arts, and accomplishments; † and even employed hired instructors for this purpose. We have little reason, however, to think that the servile classes generally received any education in the most limited sense of the term. There was apparently no benefit to accrue to the master, from his hewers of wood and drawers of water being able to read and write. The obedience of slaves was enforced by severe discipline. The masters availed themselves of the latitude of the law in this respect to the utmost extent. A blow with the hand was a very ready discipline.‡ The lash and rod were in frequent use.§ If a slave spoke or coughed at a forbidden time, he was flogged by a very severe master.|| The toilet of a lady of fashion was a terrible ordeal for a slave. A stray curl was an inexorable offence, and the slave's back was punished for the faults of the mirror.¶ Whips and thongs were not the most dreadful instruments of punishment. Burning alive is mentioned as a punish-

* *Omnes qui exponerentur, liberos esse sanxit, nec redire in dictinem domini, si convaluisserent.*—*Suet. vit. Claud.* 25.

† *Literulis Græcis inbutis, idoneus arti Cuilibet.*—*Hor. Ep. l. 2. 2. 7.*

Donatus says that Virgil was very partial to two slaves, Utrumque non ineruditum dimisit.—*Alexandrum grammaticum, Cebetem vero et poetam.*

‡ *Nos colaphum incutimus lambenti crustulo servo.*—*Juv. 9. 5.*

§ *Vox domini fuit instantis virgamque tenentis.*—*Id. 14. 63.*

|| *Et ne fortuita quidem verberibus excepta sunt, tussis, sternutamentum, singultus, etc.*—*Sen. Ep. 47.*

¶ *Unus de toto peccaverat orbe comarum Annulus, incerta non bene fixus acu.*

*Hoc facinus Lalage speculo, que viderat, ulta est,
Et cecidit sectis icta Plecusa comis.*—*Mart. l. 2. Ep. 66.*

ment in the Pandects and elsewhere. Tertullian says it was first used for slaves alone.* Vine saplings, as instruments of punishment, were least dishonourable,—next to them rods, fustes or virgæ,—then thongs, lora,—scourges, flagella or flagra, sometimes loaded with lead, plumbata. Chain scourges were used, with weights at the end, all of bronze or tin. The equuleus was a terrible instrument of torture. Dislocation was one of its effects.† There were also the fidiculae, lyre-strings, the ungula and forceps, &c. A slave taken among soldiers was cast from the capitoline rock, having been first manumitted, that he might be worthy of that punishment.‡ As slaves could not testify on the rack against their own master, they were sold to others, and thus qualified to testify.§ Cruel masters sometimes hired torturers by profession, or had such persons in their establishments, to assist them in punishing their slaves, or in extorting confessions from them; and many horrible torments were employed for those purposes.|| The noses, ears, teeth, or even eyes, were in great danger from an enraged master.¶ Crucifixion was frequently made the fate of a wretched slave for trifling misconduct, or for mere caprice.** Cato, the censor, used after supper to seize a

* Sed de patibulo et vivicomburio per omne ingenium crudelitatis exhaustis.—*Tert. de Anima*, 1.

† Seneca, Ep. 19.

‡ Dio Cassius, 1. 48. Han. ed. p. 337, 1606.

§ Id. 55. 337, Juvenal has this:—

Tum felix, quoties aliquis tortore vocato
Uritur ardenti duo propter lintea ferro?
Quid suadet juveni lætus stridore catenæ,
Quem mire afficiunt inscripta ergastula, carcer
Rusticus?—14. 21.

|| —Sunt, quæ tortoribus annua præsent.—*Juv.* 6. 480.

¶ Trunci naribus auribusque vultus, *Mart.* 2. 83. Peccantis famuli pugno ne percutere dentes.—*Id.* 14. 68.

** Pone crucem servo; meruit quo criminis servus
Supplicium? Quis testis adest? Quis detulit? Audi.
Nulla unquam de morte hominis cunctatio longa est.
O demens, ita servus homo est? Nil fecerit, esto;
Hoc volo, sic jubeo, sit pro ratione voluntas.—*Juv.* 6. 218.

The following law was passed, A. C. 58:—Si quis a suis servis

thong, and flog such of his slaves as had not attended properly, or had dressed any dish ill. Insulting appellations were given to slaves who had been often subjected to punishment. One who had frequently been beaten was called *mastigia* or *verbero*;—he who had been branded was termed *stigmatias*, or *stigmatius*, or *inscriptus*, or *literatus*;—and he who had borne the *furca* was named *furcifer*. No distinction whatever seems to have been maintained between the modes of punishing male and female slaves. The laws which abolished the master's power of life and death, appear to have been obeyed with great reluctance, and frequently virtually defeated by an increase in the amount of an inferior punishment.

Slaves had various rewards for good conduct held out to them by their masters. The chief of these were manumission, or promotion to a better situation in their owner's service, as to the place of steward or superintendent. They were sometimes allowed to keep a share of the profits of their business, or money was given them in acknowledgment of special services. Slaves had generally a separate fund, called *peculium*, though this was strictly the property of the master. At the *Saturnalia*, slaves were treated like masters, feasting at their owner's tables, having license to say what they pleased without fear of chastisement. Their other principal holidays were the *Matronalia*, in March—*Populifugia*, 7th of July—and *Campetalia*, 7th of May.*

interfектus esset, ii quoque, qui testamento manumissi sub eodem tecto mansissent, inter servos supplicia penderent.—*Tac. Ann.* 13. 32.

* The writings of M. Seneca are full of tender sympathy, and of exalted sentiments, in behalf of slaves. “*Servis*,” he says, “*imperare moderate, laus est; et in mancipio cogitandum est, non quantum illud impune pati possit, sed quantum tibi permittat æquum bonique natura.*” In the same place, the conduct of Vadius Pollio, who fed his fish with the flesh of his slaves, is reprobated in the severest manner.—*De Clem.* 1. 18. In the essay *De Beneficiis*, 1. 3. ch. 19, 20, 21, &c. many instances are recorded of grateful conduct on the part of slaves: “*Errat, si quis existimat servitutem in totum hominem descendere; pars melior ejus excepta est. Corpora obnoxia sunt, et adscripta dominis; mens quidem sui juris; quæ adeo*

The proportion between the sexes has not been ascertained. There were few female agriculturists, and the men who lived in *ergastula* would rarely have wives. Women alone were employed in spinning; but men were, as often as they, engaged in weaving. The sepulchre of the freedmen and slaves of Livia, the daughter of Augustus, as described by Gori, has 150 females names to 400 names of men.

On the whole, we may regard the condition of the slaves in the later days of the republic, and during the empire previously to the reign of Constantine, as one of great hardship. Their lot was dependent on the disposition of particular masters, not on the laws, nor on an humane and enlightened public opinion. On a cursory reading of the classical authors, we may form the opinion that slaves in general enjoyed great liberties. But we must recollect that the authors in question were conversant mainly with the vernæ, with the house slaves—with the smart, precocious slaves—children brought from Alexandria, with the educated slaves, &c. The groans from the *ergastula* do not reach our ears. We cannot gather up the tears which were shed on the Appian way,

libera et vaga est, ut ne ab hoc quidem carcere cui inclusa est, teneri queat." One of the examples quoted, is where the servant of C. Vettius, "ejus gladium militi ipsi, a quo trahebatur, eduxit, et primum dominum occidit; deinde, Tempus est, inquit, me et mihi consulere, jam dominum manumisi; atque ita se uno ictu transjecit." In the civil wars, another slave habited himself like his master and was slain, while his master escaped. A third, by wise counsel, saved the life of his master, who had spoken treasonable things against Cæsar. The 47th epistle is taken up in describing what the treatment of slaves ought to be. Unhappily, he furnishes evidence enough that his compassionate advice was but little heeded. After saying that he will pass over the instances of inhuman men, who treated their slaves more cruelly than beasts, he says, "Alius vini minister in muliebrem modum ornatus, cum æstate luctatur. Non potest effugere pueritiam; retrahitur; jamque militari habitu glaber, destrictis pilis, aut penitus evulsis, tota nocte pervigilat; quam inter ebrietatem domini ac libidinem dividit, et in cubiculo vir, et in convivio puer est." The younger Pliny was an humane master. Dio Cassius, 1. 47, of his Roman History, mentions three slaves in the time of Antony's proscription, who saved their masters at the loss of their own lives. One of them was a *stigmaticus*.

around the mausoleum of Augustus, in the countless farms of Italy. There were griefs which we know not of—sorrows, heart-rending cruelties, which will not be revealed till the day of doom. Slaves were valued only so far as they represented money. Hortensius cared less for the health of his slaves than for that of his fish. It was a question put for ingenious disputation, whether, in order to lighten a vessel in a storm, one should sacrifice a valuable horse or a worthless slave. So late as the reign of Adrian, we find that indications of insanity were not uncommon among slaves, which must generally be attributed to their misery.

The slaves not unfrequently rose in rebellion against their masters. At one time, A. C. 458, Appius Herdonius summoned the slaves from the Capitol, with the inspiring words, “*De miserrimicuj usque suscepisse causam, ut servitiis grave jugum demeret.*” In the city the terror was extreme, as no one knew whom to trust. His foes were they of his own household. A little later, A. C. 415, (Livy, 4. 45,) it was announced that “*Servitia, urbem ut incenderent distantibus locis, conjurarent.*” At another time, A. C. 271, (Livy, 22. 33,) twenty-five slaves were affixed to the cross, because they had entered into a conspiracy in the Campus Martius. Etruria, A. C. 196, (Livy, 33. 36,) was threatened with a fearful insurrection. The mournful result was, “*Multi occisi, multi capti, alios verberatos crucibus affixit, qui principes conjurationis fuerant; alios dominis restituit.*” Again, A. C. 184, (39. 29,) we read, “*Magnus motus servilis eo anno in Apulia fuit.*” Seven thousand men were condemned. In the brief language of the historian, “*de multis sumptum est supplicium.*”

In A. C. 135, an insurrection of the slaves in Sicily happened, which, says Diodorus, was the most dreadful which ever occurred. Many towns were plundered,—multitudes of persons of both sexes (*ἀνδρῶντοι*) were visited with the direst calamities,—and the slaves gained possession of almost the whole island. The insurgents, under Eunus, amounted to 70,000 men, of whom 20,000 are said to have fallen in the last defeat, and the rest to

have been taken and crucified ; but they had kept the field for six years, in the face of considerable forces.

In Italy there were vast numbers of slaves, and frequent and dangerous commotions. The first happened at Nuceria, where thirty slaves were taken and executed. In the second insurrection at Capua, 200 slaves rebelled, —they were immediately destroyed. The third took place in consequence of the disgraceful conduct of a rich Roman, Titus Minutius by name. Having proclaimed himself king, 3,500 slaves flocked to his standard. Lucius Lucullus was charged with the business of dealing with the insurgents. Minutius, having been betrayed, killed himself, and his associates perished. This was, however, but a prelude to greater troubles in Sicily. The senate having passed a decree that no freedman among the allies of the Roman people should be reduced to slavery, more than 800 in Sicily, who had been unlawfully deprived of freedom, were liberated. This excited the hopes of the slaves throughout the island. Remonstrances having been made to the prætor, he ordered those who had assembled about him, for the purpose of recovering their liberty, to return to their masters. This was the signal for a general insurrection. The insurgents having strongly fortified themselves, bade defiance to the efforts of the prætor. A certain Titinius, an outlaw, was their leader. He having at length proved treacherous to his cause, the designs of the conspirators were crushed. Soon, however, the tumult broke out afresh, and Titinius, who was sent by the prætor against the slaves, was worsted. Their number increased in a few days to more than 6000. Having chosen a certain Salvius leader, they ravaged various parts of the island. In a battle with the Romans, Salvius took 4000 prisoners. The whole island was soon in a sad condition. Salvius collected an army of 30,000 men, and assumed all the ensigns of royalty. In this manner the war was protracted for several years, and the disturbances were not fully quelled till after the most vigorous and persevering exertions of the Roman army.*

* We have drawn the preceding facts about the servile war from 330

The famous servile war in Italy, which occurred in the time of Crassus and Pompey, lasted nearly three years, and was not brought to a close without the greatest difficulty. It seems that the slaves lost 105,000 men, exclusive of those who fell in their victories over Lentulus and other generals; besides, after their main overthrow by Crassus, a body of 5000 men were vanquished by Pompey.

In A. D. 24, T. Curtius, a soldier of the pretorian cohort, at Brundisium in Italy and the neighbouring towns, fixed placards on conspicuous places, in which he called on the slaves to assert their rights. His designs were, however, soon crushed, by the unexpected appearance of a fleet. Cinna, Marius, Cataline, and the barbarian invaders of Italy, augmented their forces by promising general freedom to the slaves.*

Besides the political troubles to which we have alluded, slavery was the fruitful cause of many other evils. The slaves were much addicted to lying, which Plutarch calls the vice of slaves. They were so great thieves, that *fur* was once synonymous with slave.† It came to be said almost proverbially that slaves were foes.‡ Female slaves were exposed to so many seductions, and were, at the same time, guarded by so few better influences, that we cannot wonder at their extremely licentious conduct. Slavery fearfully increased dissoluteness in the high ranks of Romans, idleness in the lower ranks, and cruelty in both. The horrid butcheries of the amphitheatre are a sufficient proof of the sanguinary disposition of the Romans.§ The number of foreign slaves imported from

Diodorus Siculus. L. 36, where a detailed and impartial statement may be seen. This second rebellion in Sicily lasted three years.

* Plut. vit. C. Marius, Cicero in Cat. 4. 2. Sallust, Cat. 56. *Servi te reliquerunt; Alium compilaverunt, alium accusaverunt, alium occiderunt, alium prodiderunt, alium calcaverunt, alium veneno, alium criminatione, petierunt.*—Seneca, Ep. 107.

† *Exilis domus est, ubi non et multa supersunt.*

Et dominum fallunt, et prosunt furibus.—Hor. 1. Ep. 6. 45, 46.

‡ *Totidem esse hostes, quot servos.*—Sen. Ep. 47.

§ *Quam hujus amentiae causam detineam nisi fidei imbecillitatem, pronam semper concupiscentiam secularium gaudiorum?* Tertul. ad uxorem. L. 2 ch. 28; also *De Spectac.* 22.

various countries, at too advanced an age to learn the language of their lords, must have tended greatly to corrupt the Latin language.* The crowds of slaves assembled in the houses of the rich, were the means of propagating fatal diseases, which frequently ravaged the Roman world.†

Such, in brief, was the condition of the Roman world, in respect to slavery, when our Saviour appeared. Under the first Cæsars, domestic servitude had reached its height of enormity. No part of the immense empire was free from the evil. The Sicilian dungeons were full. Medians, Moesians, Bithynians, were driven in crowds to the Roman metropolis. Men-stealers were on the alert in the fastnesses of the African Troglodytes. The voice of the slave-auctioneer was heard early and late at Corinth and Delos. From Britain to Parthia, and from the woods of Sweden to the great African desert, the cries of the bondman went up to Heaven. In Judea alone there seems to have been some alleviation to the picture. Yet there the Romans doubtless transported their slaves as an indispensable part of their domestic arrangement.‡

In the Gospels there is no marked and prominent mention of slavery, though the allusions and incidental notices are not unfrequent. Thus in Matt. iii. 9, δούλος in the mouth of the Roman centurion, unquestionably means a slave. The military slaves of the Romans were the *armiger*, armour-bearer—*galearius*, helmet-bearer—

* A nunc natus infans delegatur græculæ, ancillæ, cui adjungitur unus aut alter ex omnibus servis, plerumque vilissimus, nec cuiquam serio ministerio accommodatus.—*Tac. de Caus. Corrup.* 29.

† In Heyne's *Opuscula*, Vol. III. Prol. 7, is an account of the various *pestes* which desolated Rome. The number mentioned is 33. The sixth, which happened A. U. C. 292, cut off almost all the slaves, and nearly one-half of the free population, Liv. 36. Dionys. 9. 67. In the one which occurred A. D. 69, which lasted only for an autumn, 30,000 funerals were registered, triginta funerum millia in rationem Libilitæe venerunt.—*Suet. Vit. Nero.* 39.

‡ King Agrippa exhibited at one time in Judea 700 pair of gladiators—*slaves*.—*Jos. Hist.* 19.

elevator, club-bearer—*calo* and *cacula*, soldier's drudge. In chap. xiii. 27, 28, perhaps it is the most natural to understand *θεύλος* as a slave, though a higher meaning of the word may be included. Also compare Matt. vi. 24; Luke xvi. 13; John viii. 33; xiii. 16; xv. 20. The punishment of the cross, which was inflicted on slaves and the lowest malefactors, was introduced among the Jews by the Romans. See also Acts vii. 6. In Rom. vii. 14, we find the expression *πεπραμένος ὑπὸ ἀμαρτίαν*, sold under sin, the bond-slave of sin, referring to the general practice of selling prisoners of war as slaves. They were considered as having lost their title to freedom. Corinth was long the chief slave-mart of Greece, and from its situation was likely to have much communication with Brundisium, and the other ports on the eastern side of Italy. Timæus, perhaps with some exaggeration, asserts that Corinth had, in early times, before Athens had reached her supremacy, 460,000 slaves. They were distinguished by the name *chœnix measurers*. Many of them, doubtless, embraced the Gospel, when preached by Paul, Apollos, and others. From the language employed by Paul in describing the social condition of the Corinthian converts,* as well as from the developement of the particular vices to which they were exposed, we reasonably infer that many slaves were converted. In 1 Cor. vii. 20—24, are the following words: “ Let every man abide in the same calling wherein he was called. Art thou called, being a servant? care not for it; but if thou mayest be made free, use it rather. For he that is called in the Lord, being a servant, is the Lord's freeman; likewise he that is called, being free, is Christ's servant. Ye are bought with a price, be ye not the servants of men. Brethren, let every man wherein he is called, therein abide with God.” The meaning of this passage clearly is—Be not unduly solicitous about being in a state of bondage. If you have a favourable opportunity for gaining your freedom, embrace

* Βλίπτε γὰρ τὴν κλῆσιν ὑμῶν, ἀδειφοί, ὅτι οὐ πολλοὶ σοφοὶ κατὰ σάρκα, οὐ πολλοὶ δυνατοί, οὐ πολλοὶ εὐγενεῖς. 1 Cor. i. 26, also the terms *μωρός*, *ἀσθετός*, *ἀγιτός*, *ἴξουθινηία*, *εἰς μὲν ὄντα*, &c.

it, it is the preferable state ; nevertheless, to be a free-man of Christ is infinitely more important. Your spiritual redemption is purchased at a great price, yield not a servile assent to the authority and opinions of men.*

Eph. vi. 5—9, “ Servants ! be obedient to them that are your masters according to the flesh, with fear and trembling, in singleness of your heart, as unto Christ ; not with eye-service as men-pleasers, but as the servants of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart ; with good will, doing service as to the Lord, and not to men : knowing that whatsoever good thing any man doeth, the same shall he receive of the Lord, whether he be bond or free. And, ye masters ! do the same things unto them, forbearing threatening ; knowing that your Master also is in heaven, neither is there respect of persons with him.” That slaves are here referred to is unquestionable, from the contrast in v. 8, between *δοῦλος* and *ἰλεύθερος*. Both masters and slaves are charged to perform their respective duties faithfully and kindly, as accountable alike to God. Col. iii. 22, 25, and iv. 1, are of similar import. Slaves were numerous in Colosse, in Ephesus, and in all the principal cities of Asia Minor. A principal fault in the slaves seems to have been a faithless performance of duty in the absence of their masters. Chap. iv. 1, *τὸ δίκαιον τὴν ἴστρητα*, i. e. kind treatment, such as is becoming Christian masters. That it cannot mean the legal enfranchisement of the slave, is clear ; for why, in that case, were any directions given to the slaves if the relation was not to continue ? 1 Tim. vi. 1, 2, “ Let as many servants as are under the yoke count their own masters worthy of all honour, that the name of God and his doctrine be not blasphemed. And they that have believing masters, let them not despise them,

* That *δοῦλος*, v. 22, means a slave, one in actual bondage, is made altogether certain by its being in contrast with *ἰλεύθερος γενέσθαι*, as well as by the whole spirit of the passage. There would be no sense in directing *hired* servants to change their condition if they could. After *χρῆσθαι*, v. 21, understand *ἰλεύθερος*, not *δούλος*, as the old commentators think. V. 23, *τρυπῆς* is used in a spiritual sense, with reference to the price which is paid for human freedom.

because they are brethren ; but rather do them service, because they are faithful and beloved, partakers of the benefit." Then follows, v. 3—5, an exhortation to Timothy to withdraw himself from persons who taught a contrary doctrine, and who were employing themselves in useless logomachies. Yoke ($\zeta\gamma\delta\varsigma$), servile condition, see Lev. xxvi. 13, " I have broken the bands of your yoke." It seems that the honour of the Gospel was concerned in the rendering on the part of the slave a prompt obedience to the commands of his master. Titus ii. 4, 10, is of kindred meaning. The vices of pilfering and petulance are particularly mentioned. Crete was full of slaves from the earliest times to which history carries us.

Onesimus, the subject of Paul's Epistle to Philemon, was the slave of Philemon, a Colossian, who had been made a Christian through the ministry of Paul. He absconded from his master, for a reason which is not fully explained. In the course of his flight, he met with Paul at Rome, by whom he was converted, and ultimately recommended to the favour of his old master. It may be observed that Paul would, under any circumstance, have had no choice, but to send Onesimus to his master ; the detention of a fugitive slave was considered the same offence as theft, and would no doubt incur liability to prosecution for damages. Runaways apprehended and unclaimed, were sold by order of the *Praefectus vigilum*, if not liberated by the emperor. In later times, a runaway, guiltless of other offences, was not punished for the sake of public justice, but was restored to his owner.

1 Pet. ii. 18. " Servants, be subject to your masters with all fear ; not only to the good and gentle, but also to the froward." The word $\alpha\chi\rho\tau\alpha$ is here employed. This word includes any one under the authority of another, particularly household servants, verna, familia, domestici, famuli. It is used but four times in the New Testament ; in this passage, in Luke xvi. 13. Acts x. 7. Rom. xiv. 4. In all these passages, the presumption is, that slaves are intended, as they almost universally performed the duties, which are now performed by hired servants. The $\alpha\pi\delta\alpha\pi\tau\delta\sigma\tau\eta\varsigma$, the slave trader is classed

1 Tim. i. 10, with the most abandoned sinners. Slave dealing was not esteemed an honourable occupation, or worthy of merchants, by the Romans; * and those who followed it, *mangores, venalitarii*, sometimes gave themselves an air of much consequence, trusting to their wealth, and the means of gratifying competition for the abominable, though precious objects of their traffic. †

Though the Christian religion did not by direct precept put an end to the iron servitude, which prevailed in the Roman empire, yet its whole spirit and genius are adverse to slavery, and it was the most powerful of all the causes, which were set in operation, and which finally extinguished the system throughout Europe. 1. It raised the worth of the human mind. It fully established its dignity and immortality. It poured a new light on the murderous *arena*, and on all the horrid forms of destroying life which prevailed. 2. It proclaimed the doctrine of universal love. It placed charity, kindness, and compassion among the cardinal virtues, and took away from a man all hope of salvation, unless he forgave heartily all who might have injured him. 3. It proclaimed a common Redeemer for the whole human race. It declared that in Christ, barbarian, Scythian, bond and free, were on an entire equality. 4. It taught men the value of time, made them industrious, temperate, and frugal, and thus took away the supposed necessity for servile labour. 5. It commanded all its disciples to engage personally in the great work of propagating the religion among all nations. This very enterprise, of course, embraced the millions of slaves.

We are now prepared, briefly, to consider the influence which Christianity exerted in the mitigation and final extinction of slavery. The 81st of the Apostolical

* *Mercator urbibus prodest, medicus aegris, mango venalibus; sed omnes isti, quia ad alienum commodum pro suo veniunt, nec obligant eos quibus prosunt.*—*Sen. de Benef.* 4. 13. *Radix est bulbacea, mangonicis venalitii pulchre nota, quae e vino dulci illata pubertatem coercet.*—*Plin. Nat. Hist.* 21. 97, and 32. 47.

† See Suet. Aug. 69. Macrob. *Saturn*, 2. 4. Pliny, 71. 12. Mart. 8. 13.

Canons, is in the following words: “ *Servi in clerum promoveantur citra dominorum voluntate; hoc ipsum operatur redhibitionem. Si quando verò servus quoque gradus ordinatione dignus videatur, qualis est noster Onesimus apparuit, et domini consenserint, manuque emiserint, et domo sua ablegaverint; efficitor.* ” In chap. 2nd of the Epistle of Ignatius of Antioch to Polycarp of Smyrna, are the following: “ Overlook not the men and maid servants; neither let them be puffed up; but rather let them be the more subject to the glory of God, that they may obtain from him a better liberation. Let them not desire to be set free at the public cost, that they be not slaves to their own lusts.” In the general Epistle of Barnabas, chap. xiv. v. 15, “ Thou shalt not be bitter in thy commands towards any of thy servants that trust in God; lest thou chance not to fear him who is over both; because he came not to call any with respect of persons, but whomsoever the Spirit prepared.”

A warm sympathy was felt, it seems, by many of the primitive Christians in behalf of the slaves. Clemens, in his Epistle to the Corinthians, remarks: “ We have known many among ourselves, who have delivered themselves into bonds and slavery, that they might restore others to their liberty; many, who have hired out themselves servants unto others, that, by their wages, they might feed and sustain them that wanted.” Paulinus, bishop of Nola, expended his whole estate, and then sold himself, in order to accomplish the same object. Serapion sold himself to a stage-player, and was the means of converting him, and his family. Ambrose, (Off. 1. 2.) enjoins that great care should be taken of those in bondage. Cyprian, (Ep. 60,) sent to the bishop of Numidia, in order to redeem some captives, 2,500 crowns. Socrates, the historian, says, that after the Romans had taken 7,000 Persian captives, Acacius, bishop of Amida, melted the gold and silver plate of his church, with which he redeemed the captives. Ambrose, of Milan, did the same in respect to the furniture of his church. It was the only case in which the imperial constitutions allowed plate to be sold.

During the early persecutions, reduction to slavery, in a very horrid form, was employed as a punishment for the embracing of the faith. Female Christians were often condemned to be given up as slaves to the keepers of public brothels in Rome, in order to be subjected to open prostitution. Such was the fate of Agnes, of whom Ambrose thus speaks, “ *Insanus judex jussit eam expoliari, et nudam ad lupanar duci, sub voce praeconis dicentis, Agnem sacrilegam virginem Diis blasphemia inferentem scortum lupanaribus doctum.* ” Her offence was her refusal to worship Vesta.* Lactantius has the remark, that if any slave became a Christian, all hope of freedom was taken away.

These severe enactments were in some measure neutralized by the compassionate treatment of the church. After the establishment of Christianity, under Constantine, slaves partook of all the ordinances of religion; † and their birth was no impediment to their rising to the highest dignities of the priesthood. Slaves holding the true faith, were sometimes taken into the service of the church. ‡ At first, indeed, it was required, that a slave should be enfranchised, before ordination; but Justinian declared the simple consent of the master to be sufficient. If a slave had been ordained without his master's knowledge, the latter might demand him within a year, and the slave fell back into his master's power. If a slave, after ordination, with his master's consent, chose to renounce the ecclesiastical state, and returned to a secular life, he was given back as a slave to his master. It was

* Sermon 90, Tertullian, *Apol.* chap. 50. “ *Nam et proxime ad lenonem damnando Christianum potius quam ad leonem,* ” &c. August. *De Civit. Dei*, 1. 26. “ *Sed quaedam sanctae feminae tempore persecutionis, ut insectatores suae pudicitiae devitarent, in rapturum atque necaturum se fluvium projecerunt.* ” Lactantius also says, vol. 2. p. 214, *Fidelissimi quique servi contra dominos vexabantur.*

† Paul mentions slaves having been baptized, 1 Cor. xii. 13, *ἵηται δοῦλοι οἵτινες Ιησούσθησαν*—*βέασται θηραματισμοί*, &c.

‡ Quo magis necessarium credidi, ex duabus ancillis, *quae ministrae dicebantur*, quid esset veri, et per tormenta quaerere.—*Plin. Ep. 10. 97.*

common for the patrons of churches, till the 5th century, to encourage their slaves to become clergymen, that they, in preference to strangers, might receive their benefices. Slaves were fully protected, in the exercise of worship, and, to a certain extent, in the observance of religious festivals. The liberty and gambols of the *saturnalia*, were transferred to Christmas. If a Christian slave fell into the hands of a heathen master, the latter was prohibited from interfering with his spiritual concerns. Judaism was looked upon with such horror, that any Christian was entitled to force a Jewish master to sell to him a Christian slave.

Augustus restrained the right of indiscriminate and unlimited manumission. Antoninus empowered the judge, who should be satisfied about the slave's complaint of ill treatment, to force the master to sell him to some other owner. The master's power of life and death over his slaves, was first sought to be legally abolished, by Adrian, and Antoninus Pius. Constantine placed the wilful murder of a slave on a level with that of a free-man, and expressly included the case of a slave who died under punishment, unless it was inflicted with the usual instruments of correction. The effect of this humane law was, however, done away by a subsequent enactment of Constantine. Several councils of the church endeavoured to repress slave-murder, by threatening the perpetrators with temporary excommunication.* Adrian suppressed the work-houses for the confinement of slaves. Several humane laws were enacted by Constantine, in relation to the separation of families. One directs that property shall be so divided, "ut *integra apud possessorem unumquemque servorum agnatio permaneat.*" Another law says, "ut *integra apud successorem unumquemque servorum, vel colonorum adscriptitiae conditionis, seu inquilinorum proximorum agnatio, vel adfinitas permaneat.*" A Christian church afforded very great safety

* *Et in pluribus quidem conciliis statutum est, excommunicationi, vel poenitentiae biennii esse subjiciendum, qui servum proprium sine conscientia judicis occidunt, Muratori.*

from the wrath of unmerciful owners, for when a slave took refuge there, it became the duty of the ecclesiastics to intercede for him, with his master ; and if the latter refused to pardon the slave, they were bound not to give him up, but to let him live within the precincts of the sanctuary, till he chose to depart, or his owner granted him forgiveness. In Christian times, the ceremony of manumission,* which was performed in church, particularly at Easter, and other festivals of religion, was considered the most regular mode of emancipation, and came to displace, in a great measure, the other forms. This mode was introduced and regulated by three laws of Constantine ;† but it was not adopted over the whole empire at once, as nearly 100 years afterwards, the Council of Carthage, A. D. 401, resolved to ask of the emperor, authority to manumit in church. The request was granted. Augustine, in one of his sermons, mentions the formalities thus observed in conferring freedom.‡ After the establishment of Christianity, as the national religion,

* The different modes of manumission were the following ; 1. Vindicta, the pronouncing of a form of words by the owner before the praetor. 2. Census, enrolment in the censor's books. 3. Testamentum, by will. 4. Epistolam, by letter. 5. Per convivium, at the banquet. 6. By the master designedly calling the slave his son. 7. By actual adoption. 8. Leave given to a slave to subscribe his name as witness. 9. Attiring a slave in the insignia of a freeman, &c.

† The following is the rescript of Constantine : “ *Qui religiosa mente in ecclesiae gremio servulis suis meritam concesserint libertatem, eandem eodem jure donasse videantur, quo civitas Romana solennitatibus decursis dari consuevit. Sed hoc duntaxat iis, qui sub aspectu antistitium, dederint, placuit relaxari. Clericis autem amplius concedimus, ut, cum suis famulis tribuunt libertatem, non solum in conspectu ecclesiae ac religiosi populi plenum fructum libertatis concessisse dicantur, verum etiam cum postremo judicio libertates dederint, seu quebuscumque verbis dari praeceperint; ita ut ex die publicatae voluntatis, sine aliquo juris teste vel interprete, competat directa libertas.*

‡ Augustine, in another place, holds the following language. “ *Non oportet Christianum possidere servum quomodo equum aut argentum. Quis dicere audeat ut vestimentum eum debere contemni? Hominem namque homo tamquam seipsum diligere debet cui ab omnium Domino, ut inimicos diligit, imperatur.*

when heresy came to be dreaded as much as treason, slave-testimony was received equally in respect to matters relating to their own interests, and to those of their masters. The church did not openly maintain the validity of slave-nuptials for many years. Attempts of free persons to form marriages with slaves, were severely punished.* Justinian removed most of the obstacles which preceding emperors had placed in the way of manumission. Slavery did not cease, however, till a comparatively late period.†

SLAVERY IN THE MIDDLE AGES.

Before the conclusion of the fifth century, the Roman empire in all the West of Europe was overthrown by the Northern barbarous nations. The Vandals were masters of Africa,—the Suevi held part of Spain, the Visigoths held the remainder, with a large portion of Gaul,—the Burgundians occupied the provinces watered by the Rhone and Saone,—the Ostrogoths nearly the whole of Italy. Among these barbarous nations, involuntary servitude, in various forms, seems to have existed. Tacitus *De Moribus Germanorum*, 25, says, “ The slaves in general were not arranged at their several employments in the household affairs, as is the practice at Rome. Each has his separate habitation, and his own establishment to manage. The master considers him as an agrarian de-

* The emperor Basilius allowed slaves to marry, and receive the priestly benediction, but this having been disregarded, Alexius Comnenus renewed the permission. It seems to have been thought either that the benediction gave freedom, or ought to be followed by it.—*Blair*. See *Justin, Graeco-Roman*, Lib. 2. 5.

† The authorities on the general subject, which we have consulted, are the different codes of Roman law, Gibbon, two Essays of M. De Burigny, in vols. 35 and 37 of *Memoires de l'Academie des Inscriptions*, *Blair's Inquiry into the State of Slavery among the Romans*, Edinburgh 1833, a valuable work. In nearly all the facts which we have quoted from him, we have referred to the original authorities. We have made a personal examination of nearly all the extant Latin authors, including the historians of *Byzantium*, and the early writers and fathers of the Christian Church.

pendent, who is obliged to furnish a certain quantity of grain, of cattle, or of wearing apparel. The slave obeys, and the state of servitude extends no further. All domestic affairs are managed by the master's wife and children. To punish a slave with stripes, to load him with chains, to condemn him to hard labour, is unusual. It is true that slaves are sometimes put to death, not under colour of justice or of any authority vested in the master, but in a transport of passion, in a fit of rage, as is often the case in a sudden affray ; but it is also true that this species of homicide passes with impunity. The freedmen are not of much higher consideration than the actual slaves. They obtain no rank in the master's family, and, if we except the parts of Germany where monarchy is established, they never figure on the stage of public business. In despotic governments they rise above the men of ingenuous birth, and even eclipse the whole body of nobles. In other States, the subordination of the freedmen is a proof of public liberty." It is not easy to determine whether liberty most flourished in Germany or Gaul. In the latter, the influence of religion was much greater ; while in the former there was more individual independence. In Gaul, however, manumission was much more frequent,—the slaves being made free, in order that they might, on any emergency, be able to assist their lords, who had not, like the German barons, freeborn warriors always at hand to assist them. In Gaul, the church had a much greater number of slaves : and under the influence of Christianity, slavery is always sure to be mitigated.

In the various ancient codes of law,* the first thing which strikes us is the distinction of social ranks. The fundamental one is that of freemen and slaves. Besides the slaves who became so by birth or the fortune of war, anciently any freeman could dispose of his own liberty, —if he married a female slave, he incurred the same penalty,—if unable to pay his debts, he became the bonds-

* Such as the Lex Salica, the Code of the Ripuarii, Code of the Burgundians, Lex Saxonum, &c.

man of his creditors. The code of the Lombards in Italy seems, in some respects, to have been peculiarly rigorous. For him who slew his own slave, no punishment was provided ; but no composition would atone for the life of the slave who assassinated a freeman. If a slave presumed to marry a freewoman, the doom of both was death ; but the freeman might marry his maiden, provided he previously enfranchised her. Such unions were, however, regarded as disgraceful. The slave had little hope of escape. Enfranchisement was far from frequent, and the *libertus* was as dependent on his patron as the slave on his owner—neither could marry beyond his own caste, without incurring the penalty of death ; yet marriage was all but obligatory, that servitude might be perpetuated. Manumission generally took place in the churches, or by will, or by a written instrument ; and these three modes were also common to the Romans ; but there were others peculiar to certain nations. In France, it was effected by striking a *denarius* from the hands of the slave, or by opening the door for him to escape. The Lombards delivered him to one man, this man delivered him to a third, the third to a fourth, who told him he had leave to go east, west, north, or south. The owner might also deliver his slave to the king, that the king might deliver him to the priest, who might manumit him at the altar. Among the Lombards, the symbol was sometimes an arrow, which, being delivered to the slave, betokened that he was now privileged to bear arms—the distinguishing characteristic of freedom.* The condition of the *liberti* varied ; those who were emancipated before the altar, were exempted from every species of dependence. The same may be said of the manumissio per denarium, per quartam manum, per portas patentes ; but if per chartam, the *libertus* obtained a much less share of freedom ; if he escaped from personal, he was still subject to other service, and to the jurisdiction of his late owner. The rustic freedman seldom possessed any land, and if he removed, as his new condition

* See Muratori's Ital. Scriptor. Rerum, Vol. 1. Pars. 2, p. 90.
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allowed him, to any city or town, he was still bound by an annual return to his patron. He could not depose in a court of justice to that patron's prejudice, nor marry without his consent. The *ingenuus*, who enjoyed freedom without any civil dignity, and who was privileged to carry arms, often engaged himself as the client of some chief, with whom he fought during war, and administered justice during peace ; if no client, he was still liable to military service, and to assist in the local courts. Among the Salian Franks, if a freeman married a slave, he became a slave. The Ripuarians were still more severe ; the woman, who had married a slave, was offered, by the local judge or court, a sword and a spindle ; if she took the former, she must kill her husband ; if the latter, she must embrace servitude with him. Greater severity still was found among the Burgundians, Visigoths, and Lombards. Among the Saxons, says Adam of Bremen, it is commanded, that no unequal marriages be contracted—that noble marry with noble, freeman with freewoman, freedman with freedwoman, slave with slave ; for if any one should marry out of his condition, he is punished with death. A criminal leniency towards crimes committed against slaves, and great severity towards crimes committed by that unfortunate class, characterise, more or less, all the German codes. By the *Lex Saxonum*, the mulct for the murder of a noble, was 1440 sols to the kindred, besides a fine to the State ; for that of a freedman, 120 ; for that of a slave, by a noble, 36 ; but by a freedman, an oath of compurgation sufficed.

The perpetual wars in which these nations were engaged, greatly increased the number of slaves. The Goth, the Burgundian, or the Frank, who returned from a successful expedition, dragged after him a long train of sheep, of oxen, and of human captives, whom he treated with the same brutal contempt. The youths of an elegant form were set apart for the domestic service ; a doubtful situation, which alternately exposed them to the favourable, or cruel impulse of passion. The useful smiths, carpenters, cooks, gardeners, &c. employed their skill for the benefit of their masters. But the Roman

captives, who were destitute of art, but capable of labour, were condemned, without regard to their former condition, to tend the cattle, and cultivate the lands of the barbarians. The number of the hereditary bondsmen, who were attached to the Gallic estates, was continually increased by new supplies. When the masters gave their daughters in marriage, a train of useful servants, chained on the waggons to prevent their escape, was sent as a nuptial present, into a distant country. The Roman laws protected the liberty of each citizen against the rash effects of his own distress or despair. But the subjects of the Merovingian kings might alienate their personal freedom.* From the reign of Clovis, during five successive centuries, the laws and manners of Gaul uniformly tended to promote the increase, and to confirm the duration, of personal servitude.

In a later age, and during the prevalence of the feudal system, the lower class of the population may be considered under three divisions. 1. *Freemen*, distinguished among the writers of the middle ages, as *Arimanni*, *Conditionales*, *Originarii*, *Tributales*, &c. These persons possessed some small allodial property of their own, and besides that, cultivated some farm belonging to their more wealthy neighbours, for which they paid a fixed rent, and likewise bound themselves to perform several small services. These were properly free persons, yet such was the spirit of oppression cherished by the great landholders, that many freemen in despair renounced their liberty, and voluntarily surrendered themselves as slaves to their powerful masters. This they did, in order that their masters might become more immediately interested to afford them protection, together with the means of subsisting themselves and their families. It was still more common for freemen to surrender their liberty to bishops or abbots, that they might partake of the security which the vassals and slaves of monasteries and churches enjoyed. 2. *Villani*. They were likewise *adscripti*

* *Licentiam habeatis mihi qualemque volueritis disciplinam ponere; vel venumdare, aut quod vobis placuerit de me facere.*

glebae or *villae*, from which they derived their name. They differed from slaves, in that they paid a fixed rent to their master for the land which they cultivated, and, after paying that, all the fruits of their labour and industry belonged to themselves in property. They were, however, precluded from selling the lands on which they dwelt. Their persons were bound, and their masters might reclaim them, at any time, in a court of law, if they strayed. In England, at least from the reign of Henry II., the villeins were incapable of holding property, and destitute of redress, except against the most outrageous injuries. Their tenure bound them to what were called villein-services, such as the felling of timber, the carrying of manure, and the repairing of roads. But, by the customs of France and Germany, persons in this abject state, seem to have been serfs, and distinguished from villeins, who were only bound to fixed payments and duties.*

3. *Servi.* The masters of slaves had absolute power over their persons, and could inflict punishment when they pleased, without the intervention of a judge. They possessed this dangerous right, not only in the more early periods, when their manners were fierce, but it continued as late as the 12th century. Even after this jurisdiction of masters came to be restrained, the life of a slave was deemed to be of so little value, that a very slight compensation atoned for taking it away. In cases where culprits, who were freemen, were punished by fine, slaves were punished corporeally. Slaves might be put to the rack, on very slight occasions. During several centuries after the barbarous nations embraced Christianity, slaves who lived together as husband and wife, were not joined together by any religious ceremony, and did not receive the nuptial benediction from a priest. When this connection came to be considered as lawful marriage, the slaves were not permitted to marry, without the con-

* See Ducange on the words, *Villanus*, *Servus*, *Obnoxatio*. Also Hallam's Middle Ages, Vol. I., p. 121, and a note in Vol. I of Robertson's Charles V.

sent of their masters; and such as ventured to do so, without obtaining that, were punished with great severity, and sometimes were put to death. Afterwards, such delinquents were subjected only to a fine. All the children of slaves were in the same condition with their parents, and became the property of their masters. Slaves were so entirely the property of their masters, that they could sell them at pleasure. While domestic slavery continued, property in a slave was sold in the same manner with that which a person had in any other moveable property. Afterwards, slaves became *adscripti glebae*, and were conveyed by sale, together with the farm or estate to which they belonged. Slaves had a title to nothing but subsistence and clothes from their master. If they had any *peculium*, or fixed allowance for their subsistence, they had no right of property in what they saved out of that. All that they accumulated, belonged to their master. Slaves were distinguished from freemen by a peculiar dress. Among all the barbarous nations, long hair was a mark of dignity and freedom. Slaves were, for that reason, obliged to shave their heads, and thus they were constantly reminded of their own inferiority. For the same reason, it was enacted in the laws of almost all the nations of Europe, that no slave should be admitted to give evidence against a freeman in a court of justice.*

When charters of liberty or manumission were granted to persons in servitude, they contained four concessions, corresponding to the four capital grievances to which men in bondage are subject. 1. The right of disposing

* Ducange, under the word *servus*, mentions, among others, the following classes of slaves. Of the field; *beneficiarii*, attached to the soil, *adscripti glebae*; *censuales servi civitatis*, public slaves; *seri comitum*; *consuetudinarii*, a species of serfs; *ecclesiastici*, belonging to the church; *fiscales*, connected with the royal treasury; *fugitiivi*; *seri fundorum*; *gregarii*; *massari*, a species of serfs; *ministeriales*, domestics, employed in and about the house, of whom 20 classes are enumerated; *palatii*; *seri poenae*; *stipendarii*; *testamentales*; *tributarii*; *triduani*, who served three days for themselves, and three for their masters; *vicarii*, who performed in the country seats, duties for their masters, &c.

of their persons, by sale or grant, was relinquished. 2. Power was given to them of conveying their property and effects by will, or any other legal deed. Or if they happened to die intestate, it was provided that their property should go to their lawful heirs, in the same manner as the property of other persons. 3. The services and taxes which they owed to their superior, which were previously arbitrary, and imposed at pleasure, were precisely ascertained. 4. They are allowed the privilege of marrying, according to their own inclination. Many circumstances combined to effect this deliverance for the slaves. The spirit and precepts of the Christian religion were of great efficacy. Christians became so sensible of the inconsistency of their conduct with their professions, that to set a slave free, was deemed an act of highly meritorious piety. "The humane spirit of the Christian religion," says Dr. Robertson, "struggled long with the maxims and customs of the world, and contributed more than any other circumstance to introduce the practice of manumission."* A great part of the charters of manumission, previously to the reign of Louis X, are granted *pro amore Dei, pro remedio animae, et pro mercede animae*. The formality of manumission was executed in the church, as a religious solemnity. The person to be set free, was led round the great altar, with a torch in his hand; he took hold of the horns of the altar, and there the solemn words of conferring liberty, were pronounced. Another method of obtaining liberty, was, by entering into holy orders, or taking the vow in a monastery. This was permitted for some time, but so many slaves escaped by this means, out of the hands of their masters, that the practice was afterwards restrained, and at last

* When Pope Gregory, towards the end of the 6th century, granted liberty to some of his slaves, he introduces this reason for it, "Cum Redemptor noster, totius conditor naturae, ad hoc propitiatus humanam carnem voluerit asseverare, ut divinitatis suae gratia, dirempto (quo tenebatur captivi) vinculo, pristinae nos restituere libertati; salubriter agitur, si homines, quos ab initio liberos natura protulit, et jus gentium jugo substituit servitutis, in ea, quan- nati fuerant, manumittentis beneficio, libertati reddantur."

prohibited by the laws of most of the nations of Europe. Princes, on the birth of a son, or other joyous event, enfranchised a certain number of slaves, as a testimony of gratitude to God. There are several kinds of manumission, published by Marculfus, and all of them are founded on religious considerations, in order to procure the favour of God, or to obtain the forgiveness of sins. Mistaken ideas concerning religion, induced some persons to relinquish their liberty. The *oblati*, or voluntary slaves of churches or monasteries, were very numerous. Great, however, as the power of religion was, it does not appear that the enfranchisement of slaves was a very frequent practice, while the feudal system maintained its ascendancy. The inferior order of men owed the recovery of their liberty, in part, to the decline of that aristocratical policy, which lodged the most extensive power in the hands of a few members of the society, and depressed all the rest. When Louis X. issued his ordinance, some slaves had been so long accustomed to servitude, that they refused to accept of the freedom which was offered to them. Long after the reign of Louis X. several of the ancient nobility continued to exercise dominion over their slaves. In some instances, when the praedial slaves were declared to be freemen, they were still bound to perform certain services to their ancient masters, and were kept in a state different from other subjects, being restricted either from purchasing land, or becoming members of a community, within the precincts of the manor to which they formerly belonged.

Slavery seems to have existed among our English ancestors from the earliest times. The anecdote respecting the *Angli*, found in Rome by Pope Gregory, is well known. The Anglo-Saxons, in their conquests, probably found, and certainly made, a great number of slaves. The posterity of these men inherited the lot of their fathers. Many free-born Saxons, on account of debt, want, or crime, lost their liberty. The enslavement of a freeman was performed before a competent number of witnesses. The unhappy man laid on the ground his sword and lance, the symbols of the free, took up the bill

and the goad, the implements of slavery, and falling on his knees, placed his head, in token of submission, under the hands of his master. In the more ancient laws, we find various classes of slaves. The most numerous class were the *villani*. All were, however, forbidden to carry arms, were subjected to ignominious punishments, and might be branded and whipped according to law.* In the charter by which one Harold of Buckenhale gives his manor of Spalding to the Abbey of Croyland, he enumerates among its appendages, Colgrin his bailiff, Harding his smith, Lefstan his carpenter, Elstan his fisherman, Osmund his miller, and nine others who were probably husbandmen ; and these, with their wives and children, their goods and chattels, and the cottages in which they lived, he transfers in perpetual possession to the Abbey. The sale and purchase of slaves prevailed during the whole of the Anglo-Saxon period. The toll in the market of Lewes was one penny for the sale of an ox, four pennies for that of a slave. To the importation of foreign slaves no impediment had ever been imposed. The export of native slaves was forbidden under severe penalties ; but habit and avarice had taught the Northumbrians to bid defiance to all the efforts of the Legislature. They even carried off their relations and sold them as slaves in the ports of the continent. The men of Bristol were the last to abandon this traffic. Their agents travelled into every part of the country,—they were instructed to give the highest price for females in a state of pregnancy,—and the slave-ships regularly sailed from that port to Ireland, where they were secure of a ready and profitable market. At last Wulstan, Bishop of Worcester, visited Bristol several years successively, resided for months in the neighbourhood, and preached every Sunday against the barbarity and irreligion of the slave-dealers.

* In the reign of Athelstan, a man-thief was ordered to be stoned to death by twenty of his fellows, each of whom was punished with three whippings if he failed thrice to hit the culprit. A woman-thief was burnt by 80 women-slaves, each of whom brought three billets of wood to the execution. If she failed, she was likewise whipped.

The merchants were convinced by his reasons, and in their guild solemnly bound themselves to renounce the trade. The perfidy of one of the members was punished with the loss of his eyes. The influence of religion considerably mitigated the hardships of the slaves. The bishop was the appointed protector of the slaves in his diocese. The masters were frequently admonished that slaves and freemen were of equal value in the eyes of the Almighty ; that all had been redeemed at the same price ; and that the master would be judged with the same rigour as he had exercised towards his dependents. The prospect of obtaining their freedom was a powerful stimulus to their industry and good behaviour. When the celebrated Wilfred had received from Edelevaleh, King of Sussex, the donation of the isles of Selsey, with 250 slaves, the bishop instructed them in the Christian faith, baptized them, and immediately made them free. In most of the wills which are still extant, we meet with directions for granting liberty to a certain number of slaves, especially such as had been reduced to slavery by the *habeo-theow*, a judicial sentence. Their manumission to be legal was to be performed in the market, in the court of the hundred, or in the church.

On the abstract of the population of England in the Domesday Book, at the close of the reign of William the Conqueror, the whole population is stated at 283,242, of which, the *servi* are 25,156 ; *ancillae*, 467 ; *bordarii*, 8249 ; *villani*, 108,407 — total, 216,149 ; leaving for the remaining classes, 67,093. The *servi* of the Norman period, says Bishop Kennett, might be the pure *villani*, and *villani in gross*, who, without any determined tenure of land, were at the arbitrary pleasure of the lord, appointed to servile works, and received their wages and maintenance at the discretion of their lord. We have the authority of Bracton for asserting, that however unhappy the condition of the *servi* was in other respects, yet their lives and limbs were under the protection of the laws ; so that if the master killed his bondman, he was subject to the same punishment as if he had killed any other person. The form of emancipation of the

servi is minutely described in the laws of the Conqueror. The *ancillae* were female slaves under circumstances nearly similar to the *servi*. Their chastity was in some measure protected by law. The *bordarii* were distinct from the *servi* and *villani*, and seem to be those of a less servile condition, who had a bord or cottage, with a small parcel of land, on condition that they should supply the master with eggs, poultry, &c. as very necessary for his *board* and entertainment. Brady says, "they were drudges and performed vile services, which were reserved by the lord upon a poor little house, and a small parcel of land."* The *villani* have already been described.

There seems to have been no general law for the emancipation of slaves in the statute-book of England. Though the genius of the English constitution favoured personal liberty, yet servitude continued long in England in particular places. In the year 1514, we find a charter of Henry VIII. enfranchising two slaves belonging to one of his manors. As late as 1547, there is a commission from Elizabeth, with respect to the manumission of certain slaves belonging to her.

In Italy, in the 11th and 12th centuries, the number of slaves began to decrease. Early in the 15th, a writer quoted by Muratori, speaks of them as no longer existing. The greater part of the peasants, in some countries of Germany, had acquired their liberty before the end of the 13th century. In other parts, as well as in the northern and eastern portions of Europe, they remained in a sort of villenage to this day. In France, Louis Hutin, after innumerable particular instances of manumission had taken place, by a general edict in 1315, reciting that his kingdom is denominated the kingdom of the *Franks*, that he would have the fact correspond to the name, emancipates all persons in the royal domains, upon paying a just composition, as an example for other lords possessing villeins to follow. Philip the Long renewed the same edict three years afterwards—a proof that the edict

* See General Introduction to the *Doomsday Book*, by Sir Henry Ellis, principal librarian of the British Museum, 2 vols. 1838.

of Louis had not been carried into execution. Praedial servitude was not abolished in all parts of France till the revolution. In 1615, the *Tiers Etat* prayed the king to cause all serfs to be enfranchised on paying a composition; but this was not complied with, and they continued to exist in many parts. Throughout almost the whole jurisdiction of the Parliament of Besançon, the peasants were attached to the soil, not being capable of leaving it without the lord's consent;—in some places he even inherited their goods in exclusion of their kindred. Voltaire mentions an instance of his interfering in behalf of a few wretched slaves of Franche-comté. About the middle of the 15th century, some Catalonian serfs, who had escaped into France, being claimed by their lords, the Parliament of Toulouse declared that every man who entered the kingdom, *enrifiant* France, should be free.

On a review of the subject of slavery during the period in question, we find,

1. That Christianity had done much to abolish slavery as it existed in the Roman empire in the time of Constantine and his more immediate successors. The spirit of the Christian religion effected a glorious triumph in almost every portion of the imperial dominions. There was no instantaneous abandonment of the system of servitude. There was no royal edict which crushed the thing at once. But its contrariety to the precepts of the New Testament was gradually seen. Clergymen vindicated the rights of the oppressed. The codes of slave-law were ameliorated, till finally the rescripts of Justinian nearly completed the salutary reform.

2. During the last years of the Roman empire an unfortunate change was going on, which was destined once more to revive the system. The *middle class* in society was dwindling away. A few distinguished families swallowed up the moderate landholders, or drove them out of the country. A large class of hungry and spiritless dependents, with nothing of *Roman* but the name, crowded the towns and country seats. The vices of the upper class rapidly thinned their ranks, till most of the

old noble families became extinct. The barbarous lords then rushed in, finding scarcely any thing to obstruct their progress. The abject Roman multitude became slaves in form, as they had been for some time in spirit. The Goth and Vandal threw their chains on the descendants of Cincinnatus and Brutus, and sent them to work in their kitchens and farm-yards. The children of the men from whom Scipio sprung, became the scavengers and scullions of Visigoths and Huns. The way had been prepared by the destruction of the middle class—a class which contains the bone and muscle of any community in which it exists. A foundation was thus laid for the slavery of the middle ages.

3. In the darkness and confusion which reigned from the 4th to the 12th century, we might expect that such an institution as slavery would flourish. It was in a sense suited to the times. Its undistinguished and forgotten lot was in some cases, no doubt, a real blessing to individuals, though on general principle, and as a system, it is worthy of nothing but execration. Partial benefits accompanied the feudal system, though in its essential features no wise man could commend it.

4. In the abolition of the servitude of the middle ages, Christianity again performed her work of mercy. Whenever her voice could be heard, the poor *villein* was not forgotten. All contemporary and subsequent history conspires to attribute the gradual abolition of the system to her beneficent but effectual aid.

5. The northern nations of Europe seem always to have possessed a sense of individual freedom, of personal rights, which, when enlightened and directed by Christianity, became a powerful antagonist force to slavery. The spirit which broke out at Runnymede, at London in 1688, at Philadelphia in 1776, was nurtured in its infancy in the woods of Sweden, and in the marshes of Denmark.

6. The contemporaneous revival of learning must come in for its share in the abolition of slavery. Xenophon, and Cicero, and Lucan, could not be perused without exerting a beneficial influence in ameliorating the asperity

of manners, inspiring a love for freedom, and a tender sympathy towards the oppressed.

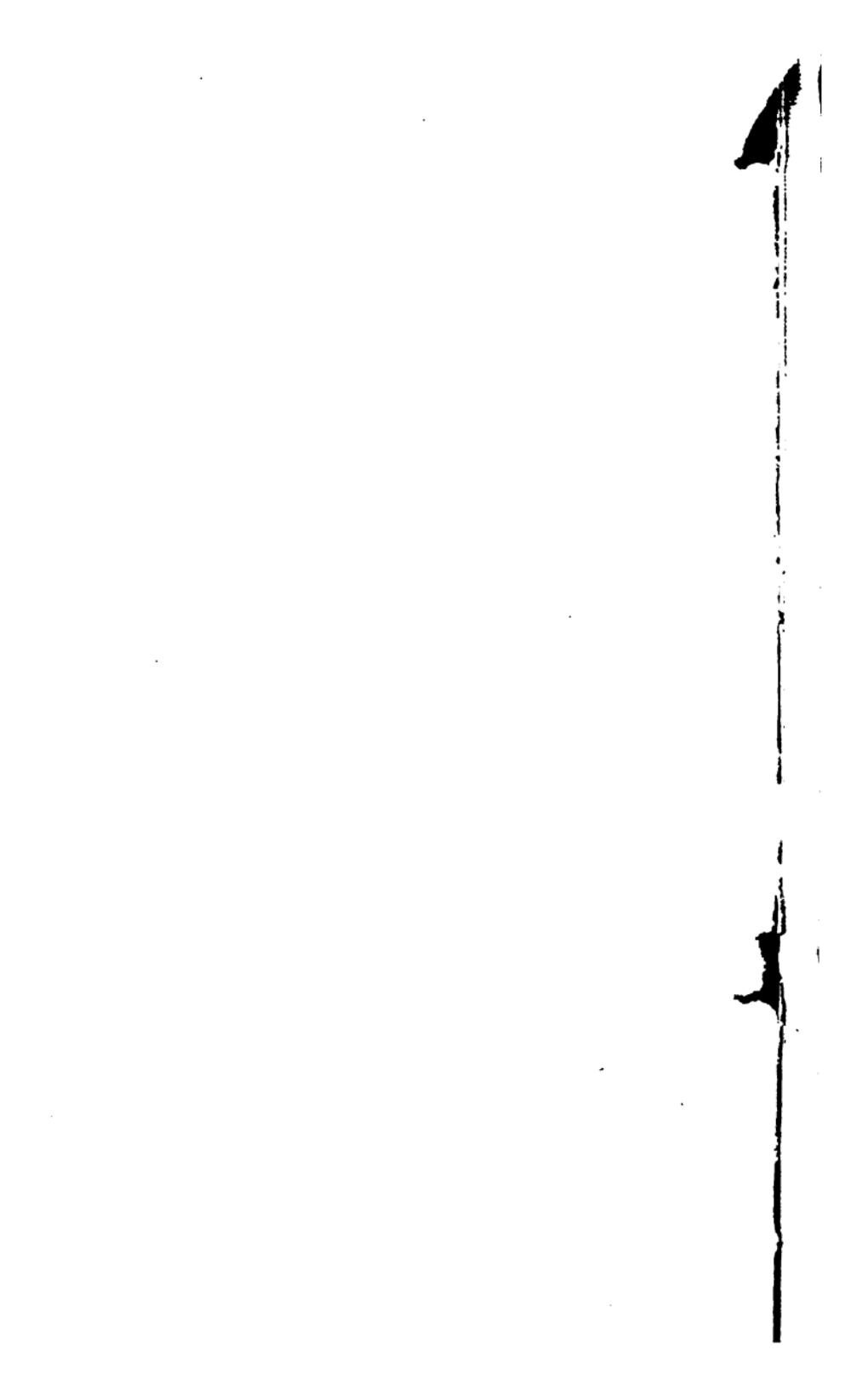
7. The same effect must be attributed to the establishment of large towns and cities. This circumstance increased the demand for labour. Various classes of artisans sprung into existence. Wherever ingenuity and skill were required, free labour was in demand. Slavery vanished before the spirit of competition. Labour became honourable. The value of land was augmented. A free population followed in the train.

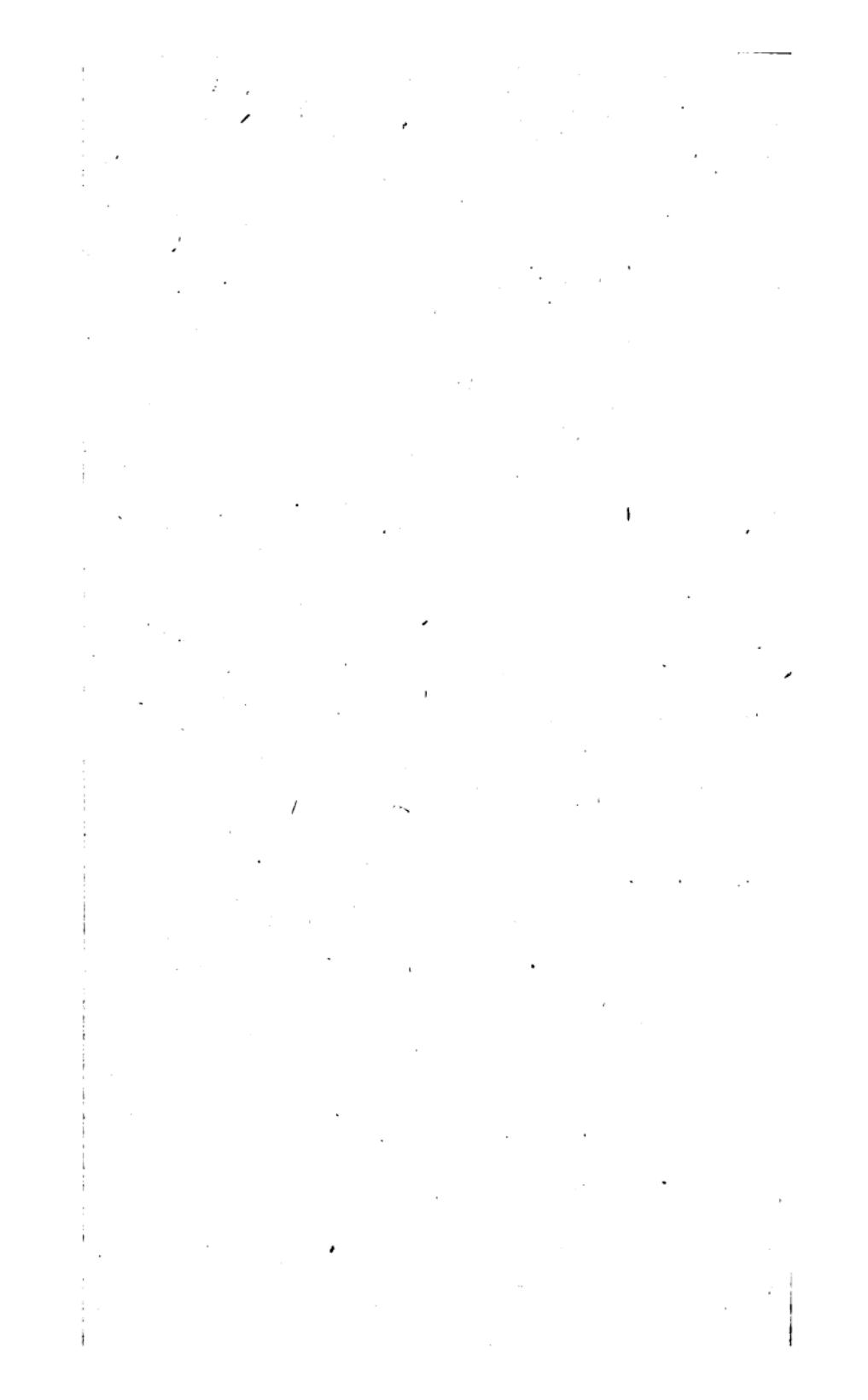
NOTE.—The original authorities on the subject which we have consulted, are the *Glossarium* of *Ducange*, on the words *Servus*, *Villanus*, *Tributales*, *Originarii*, *Forismaritagium*, *Arimanni*, *Oblati*, *Manumissio*, &c. in 6 vols. folio,—*Heineccius*, in 8 vols. 4to.—*Muratori's Antiquities of Italy*, in 6 vols. folio,—*Works of De Malby*, in French, 12 vols. 8vo. These works are in the Boston *Athenaeum*, and are an invaluable storehouse of materials. Dr. Robertson has two very valuable notes on the subject, in the first volume of his *History of Charles V.* See also *Hallam's Middle Ages*—*Brodie's British Empire*—The first volume of *Lingard's History of England*—*Turner's Anglo-Saxons*—*Dunham's Germanic Empire*—*Sismondi's Italian Republics*—*Montesquieu*—*Blackstone's Commentaries*—*Grotius de Jure Belli et Pacis*, &c.

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